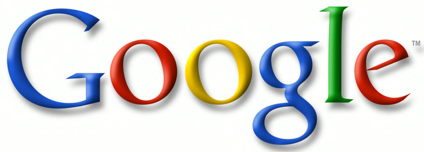






AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

AN HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

The Knowledge which the *Ancients* had of

INDIA;

AND THE

PROGRESS of TRADE with that COUNTRY prior to the Discovery of the Passage to it by the *CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.*

With an APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

Observations on the Civil Policy—the Laws and Judicial Proceedings—the Arts—the Sciences—and Religious Institutions, of the *INDIANS.*



By WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D. F.R.S. Ed.

PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY, AND HISTORIOGRAPHER TO HIS MAJESTY FOR SCOTLAND.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR A. STRAHAN, AND T. CADELL IN THE STRAND; AND E. BALFOUR AT EDINBURGH.

M DCC XCI.

PREFACE.

THE perusal of Major Rennell's Memoir for illustrating his Map of Indostan, one of the most valuable geographical treatises that has appeared in any age or country, gave rise to the following work. It suggested to me the idea of examining more fully than I had done in the Introductory Book to my History of America, into the knowledge which the Ancients had of India, and of considering what is certain, what is obscure, and what is fabulous, in the accounts of that country which they have handed down to us. In undertaking this inquiry, I had originally no other object than my own amusement and instruction:

But

But in carrying it on, and conſulting with care the authors of antiquity, ſome facts, hitherto unobſerved, and many which had not been examined with proper attention, occurred; new views opened; my ideas gradually extended and became more intereſting; until, at length, I imagined that the reſult of my reſearches might prove amuſing and inſtructive to others, by exhibiting ſuch a view of the various modes in which intercourſe with India had been carried on from the earlieſt times, as might ſhew how much that great branch of commerce has contributed, in every age, to increaſe the wealth and power of the nations which poſſeſſed it.

Thus the Hiſtorical Diſquiſition which I now lay before the Reader was begun and completed. What degree of merit it poſſeſſes, the Public muſt determine. My grateful recollection of the favourable manner in which my other works have been received, naturally increaſes the ſolicitude with which I wait for its deciſion concerning this which I now publiſh.

When

When I firſt turned my thoughts to this ſubject, I was ſo fully aware of the diſadvantage under which I laboured in undertaking to deſcribe countries of which I had not any local knowledge, that I have been at the utmoſt pains to guard againſt any errors which this might occaſion. I have conſulted, with perſevering induſtry, the works of all the authors I could procure, who have given any account of India; I have never formed any decided opinion, which was not ſupported by reſpectable authority; and as I have the good fortune to reckon among the number of my friends ſome Gentlemen who have filled important ſtations, civil and military, in India, and who have viſited many different parts of it, I had recourſe frequently to them, and from their converſation learned things which I could not have found in books. Were it proper to mention their names, the Public would allow that by their diſcernment and abilities they are fully entitled to the confidence which I have placed in them.

In the progreſs of the work, I became ſenſible of my own deficiency with reſpect to another point. In order to give an accurate idea of the imperfection both of the theory and practice of navigation among the Ancients, and to explain with ſcientific preciſion, the manner in which they aſcertained the poſition of places, and calculated their longitude and latitude, a greater portion of mathematical knowledge was requiſite, than my attention to other ſtudies had permitted me to acquire. What I wanted, the friendſhip of my ingenious and reſpectable Colleague, Mr. Playfair, Profeſſor of Mathematics, has ſupplied, and I have been enabled by him to elucidate all the points I have mentioned, in a manner which, I am confident, will afford my Readers complete ſatisfaction. To him, likewiſe, I am indebted for the conſtruction of two maps neceſſary for illuſtrating this Diſquiſition, which without his aſſiſtance I could not have undertaken.

I have adhered, in this work, to an arrangement I followed in my former compoſitions, and to which

which the Public has been long accuftomed. I have kept hiftorical narrative as much feparate as poffible from fcientific and critical difcuffions, by referving the latter for Notes and Illuftrations. I flatter myfelf that I may claim, without prefumption, the merit of having examined with diligence what I fubmit to public infpection, and of having referred, with fcrupulous accuracy, to the authors from whom I have derived information.

College of Edinburgh,
May 10th, 1791.

C O N T E N T S.

SECTION I.

SECTION II.

SECTION III.

CONTENTS.

SECTION IV.

AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION I.

Intercourse with India, from the earliest Times, until the Conquest of Egypt by the Romans.

WHOEVER attempts to trace the operations of men in remote times, and to mark the various ſteps of their progreſs in any line of exertion, will ſoon have the mortification to find, that the period of authentic hiſtory is extremely limited. It is little more than three thouſand years ſince the Books of Moſes, the moſt ancient and only genuine record of what paſſed in the early ages of the world, were SECT. I.

B composed.

SECT. I. composed. Herodotus, the most ancient Heathen historian whose works have reached us, flourished a thousand years later. If we push our inquiries concerning any point beyond the æra where written history commences, we enter upon the region of conjecture, of fable, and of uncertainty. Upon that ground I will neither venture myself, nor endeavour to conduct my readers. In my researches concerning the intercourse between the Eastern and Western regions of the earth, and concerning the progress of that great branch of trade, which, in every age, has contributed so conspicuously towards raising the people who carried it on, to wealth and power, I shall confine myself within the precincts I have marked out. Wherever the inspired writers, intent upon higher objects, mention occasionally any circumstance that tends to illustrate the subject of my inquiries, I shall attend to it with reverence. Whatever other writers relate, I shall examine with freedom, and endeavour to ascertain the degree of credit to which they are entitled.

The original station allotted to man by his Creator, was in the mild and fertile regions of the East. There the human race began its career of improvement; and from the remains of sciences which were anciently cultivated, as well as of arts which were anciently exercised in India, we may conclude it to be one of the first countries in which men made any considerable progress in that career. The wisdom of the East was early celebrated [a], and its productions were early in re-

[a] 1 Kings, iv. 30.

quest

SECT. I.

queſt among diſtant nations [b]. The intercourſe, however, between different countries was carried on at firſt entirely by land. As the people of the Eaſt appear ſoon to have acquired complete dominion over the uſeful animals [c], they could early undertake the long and toilſome journies which it was neceſſary to make, in order to maintain this intercourſe; and by the provident bounty of Heaven, they were furniſhed with a beaſt of burden, without whoſe aid it would have been impoſſible to accompliſh them. The Camel, by its perſevering ſtrength, by its moderation in the uſe of food, and the ſingularity of its internal ſtructure, which enables it to lay in a ſtock of water ſufficient for ſeveral days, put it in their power to convey bulky commodities through thoſe deſerts, which muſt be traverſed by all who travel from any of the countries weſt of the Euphrates towards India. Trade was carried on in this manner, particularly by the nations near to the Arabian Gulf, from the earlieſt period to which hiſtorical information reaches. Diſtant journies, however, would be undertaken at firſt only occaſionally, and by a few adventurers. But by degrees, from attention to their mutual ſafety and comfort, numerous bodies of merchants aſſembled at ſtated times, and forming a temporary aſſociation (known afterwards by the name of a Caravan), governed by officers of their own choice, and ſubject to regulations of which experience had taught them the utility, they performed journies of ſuch extent and duration, as appear aſtoniſhing to nations not accuſtomed to this mode of carrying on commerce.

[b] Gen. xxxvii. 25. [c] Ibid. xii. 16. xxiv. 10, 11.

SECT. I.

BUT notwithſtanding every improvement that could be made in the manner of conveying the productions of one country to another by land, the inconveniences which attended it were obvious and unavoidable. It was often dangerous; always expenſive, and tedious, and fatiguing. A method of communication more eaſy and expeditious was ſought, and the ingenuity of man gradually diſcovered, that the rivers, the arms of the ſea, and even the ocean itſelf, were deſtined to open and facilitate intercourſe with the various regions of the earth, between which they appear, at firſt view, to be placed as inſuperable barriers. Navigation, however, and ſhip-building, (as I have obſerved in another work[d]) are arts ſo nice and complicated, that they require the talents, as well as experience of many ſucceſſive ages, to bring them to any degree of perfection. From the raft or canoe, which firſt ſerved to carry a ſavage over the river that obſtructed him in the chace, to the conſtruction of a veſſel capable of conveying a numerous crew, or a conſiderable cargo of goods, to a diſtant coaſt, the progreſs of improvement is immenſe. Many efforts would be made, many experiments would be tried, and much labour as well as ingenuity would be employed, before this arduous and important undertaking could be accompliſhed.

EVEN after ſome improvement was made in ſhip-building, the intercourſe of nations with each other by ſea was far from being extenſive. From the accounts of the earlieſt hiſtorians, we learn that navigation made its firſt efforts in the Mediter-

[d] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 2.

ranean and the Arabian Gulf, and in them the firſt active operations of commerce were carried on. From an attentive inſpection of the poſition and form of theſe two great inland ſeas, theſe accounts appear to be highly probable. Theſe ſeas lay open the continents of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, and ſpreading to a great extent along the coaſts of the moſt fertile and moſt early civilized countries in each, ſeem to have been deſtined by nature to facilitate their communication with one another. We find, accordingly, that the firſt voyages of the Egyptians and Phenicians, the moſt ancient navigators mentioned in hiſtory, were made in the Mediterranean. Their trade, however, was not long confined to the countries bordering upon it. By acquiring early poſſeſſion of ports on the Arabian Gulf, they extended the ſphere of their commerce, and are repreſented as the firſt people of the Weſt who opened a communication by ſea with India.

In that account of the progreſs of navigation and diſcovery which I prefixed to the Hiſtory of America, I conſidered with attention the maritime operations of the Egyptians and Phenicians; a brief review of them here, as far as they relate to their connection with India, is all that is requiſite for illuſtrating the ſubject of my preſent inquiries. With reſpect to the former of theſe people, the information which hiſtory affords is ſlender, and of doubtful authority. The fertile ſoil and mild climate of Egypt produced the neceſſaries and comforts of life in ſuch profuſion, as to render its inhabitants ſo independent of other countries, that it became early an eſtabliſhed maxim in their policy, to renounce all intercourſe with foreigners. In

 conſequence

SECT. I. consequence of this, they held all sea-faring persons in detestation, as impious and profane; and fortifying their harbours, they denied strangers admission into them[e].

THE enterprising ambition of Sesostris, disdaining the restraints imposed upon it by these contracted ideas of his subjects, prompted him to render the Egyptians a commercial people; and in the course of his reign, he so completely accomplished this, that (if we may give credit to some Historians) he was able to fit out a fleet of four hundred ships in the Arabian Gulf, which conquered all the countries stretching along the Erythrean sea to India. At the same time, his army, led by himself, marched through Asia, and subjected to his dominion every part of it as far as to the banks of the Ganges; and, crossing that river, advanced to the Eastern Ocean[f]. But these efforts produced no permanent effect, and appear to have been so contrary to the genius and habits of the Egyptians, that, on the death of Sesostris, they resumed their ancient maxims, and many ages elapsed before the commercial connection of Egypt with India came to be of such importance as to merit any notice in this Disquisition[g].

THE history of the early maritime operations of Phenicia are not involved in the same obscurity with those of Egypt. Every circumstance in the character and situation of the Phenicians,

[e] Diodor. Sicul. lib. i. p. 78. edit. Wesselingi. Amst. 1746. Strab. Geog. lib. xvii. p. 1142. A. edit. Casaub. Amst. 1707.

[f] Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 64. [g] See NOTE I.

was favourable to the commercial ſpirit. The territory which they poſſeſſed, was neither large nor fertile. It was from commerce only, that they could derive either opulence or power. Accordingly, the trade carried on by the Phenicians of Sidon and Tyre, was extenſive and adventurous; and, both in their manners and policy, they reſemble the great commercial ſtates of modern times, more than any people in the ancient world. Among the various branches of their commerce, that with India may be regarded as one of the moſt conſiderable and moſt lucrative. As by their ſituation on the Mediterranean, and the imperfect ſtate of navigation, they could not attempt to open a direct communication with India by ſea; the enterprizing ſpirit of commerce prompted them to wreſt from the Idumæans ſome commodious harbours towards the bottom of the Arabian Gulf. From theſe they held a regular intercourſe with India, on the one hand, and with the Eaſtern and Southern coaſts of Africa on the other. The diſtance, however, from the Arabian Gulf to Tyre was conſiderable, and rendered the conveyance of goods to it by land carriage ſo tedious and expenſive, that it became neceſſary for them to take poſſeſſion of Rhinocolura, the neareſt port in the Mediterranean to the Arabian Gulf. Thither all the commodities brought from India, were conveyed over land by a route much ſhorter, and more practicable than that by which the productions of the Eaſt were carried at a ſubſequent period from the oppoſite ſhore of the Arabian Gulf to the Nile [h]. At Rhinocolura, they were reſhipped, and tranſported by an eaſy navigation to Tyre, and diſtributed

[h] Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 70. Strab. lib. xvi. p. 1128. A.

through

SECT. I. through the world. This, as it is the earlieſt route of communication with India, of which we have any authentic deſcription, had ſo many advantages over any ever known before the modern diſcovery of a new courſe of navigation to the Eaſt, that the Phenicians could ſupply other nations with the productions of India in greater abundance, and at a cheaper rate, than any people of antiquity. To this circumſtance, which, for a conſiderable time, ſecured to them a monopoly of that trade, was owing, not only the extraordinary wealth of individuals, which rendered the "merchants of Tyre, Princes, "and her traffickers the Honourable of the Earth[i];" but the extenſive power of the ſtate itſelf, which firſt taught mankind to conceive what vaſt reſources a commercial people poſſeſs, and what great exertions they are capable of making[k].

THE Jews, by their vicinity to Tyre, had ſuch an opportunity of obſerving the wealth which flowed into that city from the lucrative commerce carried on by the Phenicians from their ſettlements on the Arabian Gulf, as incited them to aim at obtaining ſome ſhare of it. This they effected under the proſperous reigns of David and Solomon, partly by the conqueſts which they made of a ſmall diſtrict in the land of Edom, that gave them poſſeſſion of the harbours of Elath and Eſiongeber on the Red Sea, and partly by the friendſhip of Hiram, king of Tyre; who enabled Solomon to fit out fleets, which, under the direction of Phenician pilots, ſailed to Tarſhiſh and Ophir[l]. In what region of the earth we ſhould

[i] Iſaiah, xxiii. 8. [k] See NOTE II. [l] Kings, ix. 26. x. 22.

ſearch

ſearch for theſe famous ports which furniſhed the navy of Solomon with the various commodities enumerated by the ſacred hiſtorians, is an inquiry that has long exerciſed the induſtry of learned men. They were early ſuppoſed to be ſituated in ſome part of India, and the Jews were held to be one of the nations which traded with that country. But the opinion more generally adopted is, that Solomon's fleets, after paſſing the ſtraits of Babelmandeb, held their courſe along the ſouth-weſt coaſt of Africa, as far as the kingdom of Sofala; a country celebrated for its rich mines of gold and ſilver, (from which it has been denominated the Golden Sofala by Oriental writers [m],) and abounding in all the other articles which compoſed the cargoes of the Jewiſh ſhips. This opinion, which the accurate reſearches of M. D'Anville rendered highly probable [n], ſeems now to be eſtabliſhed with the utmoſt certainty by a late learned traveller; who, by his knowledge of the monſoons in the Arabian Gulf, and his attention to the ancient mode of navigation, both in that ſea and along the African coaſt, has not only accounted for the extraordinary length of time which the fleets of Solomon took in going and returning, but has ſhewn, from circumſtances mentioned concerning the voyage, that it was not made to any place in India [o]. The Jews, then, we may conclude, have no title to be reckoned among the nations which carried on intercourſe with India by ſea; and if, from deference to the ſentiments of ſome reſpectable authors, their claim were to be admitted,

[m] Notices des MSS. du Roi, tom. ii. p. 40.

[n] Differt. ſur le Pays d'Ophir, Mem. de Literat. tom. xxx. p. 83, &c.

[o] Bruce's Travels, book ii. ch. 4.

SECT. I. we know with certainty, that the commercial effort which they made in the reign of Solomon was merely a tranſient one, and that they quickly returned to their former ſtate of unſocial ſecluſion from the reſt of mankind.

FROM collecting the ſcanty information which hiſtory affords, concerning the moſt early attempts to open a commercial intercourſe with India, I now proceed, with more certainty and greater confidence, to trace the progreſs of communication with that country, under the guidance of authors who recorded events nearer to their own times, and with reſpect to which, they had received more full and accurate intelligence.

THE firſt eſtabliſhment of any foreign power in India, which can be aſcertained by evidence, meriting any degree of credit, is that of the Perſians; and even of this we have only a very general and doubtful account. Darius, the ſon of Hyſtaſpes, though raiſed to the throne of Perſia by chance or by artifice, poſſeſſed ſuch active and enterprizing talents, as rendered him worthy of that high ſtation. He examined the different provinces of his kingdom more diligently than any of his predeceſſors, and explored regions of Aſia formerly little known [p]. Having ſubjected to his dominion many of the countries which ſtretch ſouth-eaſt from the Caſpian ſea towards the river Oxus, his curioſity was excited to acquire a more excluſive and accurate knowledge of India, on which they bordered. With this view he appointed Scylax of Caryandra to take the command of a ſquadron fitted out at

[p] Herodoti, lib. iv. c. 44.

Caſpatyrus,

Caſpatyrus, in the country of Pactya, [the modern Pehkely,] towards the upper part of the navigable courſe of the river Indus, and to fall down its ſtream until he ſhould reach the ocean. This Scylax performed, though it ſhould ſeem with much difficulty, and notwithſtanding many obſtacles; for he ſpent no leſs than two years and ſix months in conducting his ſquadron from the place where he embarked, to the Arabian Gulf[q]. The account which he gave of the populouſneſs, fertility, and high cultivation of that region of India through which his courſe lay, rendered Darius impatient to become maſter of a country ſo valuable. This he ſoon accompliſhed; and though his conqueſts in India ſeem not to have extended beyond the diſtrict watered by the Indus, we are led to form an high idea of its opulence, as well as of the number of its inhabitants, in ancient times, when we learn, that the tribute which he levied from it, was near a third part of the whole revenue of the Perſian monarchy[r]. But neither this voyage of Scylax, nor the conqueſts of Darius, to which it gave riſe, diffuſed any general knowledge of India. The Greeks, who were the only enlightened people at that time in Europe, paid but little attention to the tranſactions of the people whom they conſidered as Barbarians, eſpecially in countries far remote from their own; and Scylax had embelliſhed the narrative of his voyage with ſo many circumſtances, manifeſtly fabulous[s], that he ſeems to have met with the juſt puniſhment, to which perſons who have a notorious propenſity to what is marvellous, are often

[q] Herod. iv. c. 42. 44. [r] Herod. lib. iii. c. 90—96. See NOTE III.
[s] Philoſtr. Vita Apoll. lib. iii. c. 47. and Note 3d of Olearius Tzetzet. Chiliad. vii. verſ. 630.

SECT. I. ſubjected, of being liſtened to with diſtruſt, even when they relate what is exactly true.

About an hundred and ſixty years after the reign of Darius Hyſtaſpes, Alexander the Great undertook his expedition into India. The wild ſallies of paſſion, the indecent exceſſes of intemperance, and the oſtentatious diſplays of vanity too frequent in the conduct of this extraordinary man, have ſo degraded his character, that the pre-eminence of his merit, either as a conqueror, a politician, or a legiſlator, has ſeldom been juſtly eſtimated. The ſubject of my preſent inquiry leads me to conſider his operations only in one light, but it will enable me to exhibit a ſtriking view of the grandeur and extent of his plans. He ſeems, ſoon after his firſt ſucceſſes in Aſia, to have formed the idea of eſtabliſhing an univerſal monarchy, and aſpired to the dominion of the ſea, as well as of the land. From the wonderful efforts of the Tyrians in their own defence, when left without any ally or protector, he conceived an high opinion of the reſources of maritime power, and of the wealth to be derived from commerce, eſpecially that with India, which he found engroſſed by the citizens of Tyre. With a view to ſecure this commerce, and to eſtabliſh a ſtation for it, preferable in many reſpects to that of Tyre, as ſoon as he completed the conqueſt of Egypt, he founded a city near one of the mouths of the Nile, which he honoured with his own name; and with ſuch admirable diſcernment was the ſituation of it choſen, that Alexandria ſoon became the greateſt trading city in the ancient world; and, notwithſtanding many ſucceſſive revolutions in empire, continued, during

during eighteen centuries, to be the chief seat of commerce with India [t]. Amidst the military operations to which Alexander was soon obliged to turn his attention, the desire of acquiring the lucrative commerce which the Tyrians had carried on with India, was not relinquished. Events soon occurred, that not only confirmed and added strength to his desire, but opened to him a prospect of obtaining the sovereignty of those regions which supplied the rest of mankind with so many precious commodities.

After his final victory over the Persians, he was led in pursuit of the last Darius, and of Bessus, the murderer of that unfortunate monarch, to traverse that part of Asia which stretches from the Caspian sea beyond the river Oxus. He advanced towards the east as far as Maracanda [u], then a city of some note, and destined, in a future period, under the modern name of Samarcand, to be the capital of an empire not inferior to his own in extent or power. In a progress of several months, through provinces hitherto unknown to the Greeks, in a line of march often approaching near to India, and among people accustomed to much intercourse with it, he learned many things concerning the state of a country [x] that had been long the object of his thoughts and wishes [y], which increased his desire of invading it. Decisive and prompt in all his resolutions, he set out from Bactria, and crossed that ridge of mountains which, under various denominations, forms the

[t] Hist. of America, vol. i. p. 20.
[u] Arrian, iii. c. 30.
[x] Strab. xv. p. 1021. A.
[y] Arrian, iv. c. 15.

Stony

SECT. I. Stony Girdle (if I may uſe an expreſſion of the Oriental geographers) which encircles Aſia, and conſtitutes the northern barrier of India.

THE moſt practicable avenue to every country, it is obvious, muſt be formed by circumſtances in its natural ſituation, ſuch as the defiles which lead through mountains, the courſe of rivers, and the places where they may be paſſed with the greateſt eaſe and ſafety. In no place of the earth is this line of approach marked and defined more conſpicuouſly, than on the northern frontier of India; inſomuch that the three great invaders of this country, Alexander, Tamerlane, and Nadir Shah, in three diſtant ages, and with views and talents extremely different, advanced by the ſame route, with hardly any deviation. Alexander had the merit of having firſt diſcovered the way. After paſſing the mountains, he encamped at Alexandria Paropamiſana, on the ſame ſite with the modern city Candahar; and having ſubdued or conciliated the nations ſeated on the north-weſt bank of the Indus, he croſſed the river at Taxila, now Attock, the only place where its ſtream is ſo tranquil that a bridge can be thrown over it [z].

AFTER paſſing the Indus, Alexander marched forward in the road which leads directly to the Ganges, and the opulent provinces to the ſouth-eaſt, now comprehended under the general name of Indoſtan. But, on the banks of the Hydaſpes, known in modern times by the name of the Betah or Chelum,

[z] Rennell Mem. p. 92.

he

he was oppofed by Porus, a powerful monarch of the country, at the head of a numerous army. The war with Porus, and the hoftilities in which he was fucceffively engaged with other Indian princes, led him to deviate from his original route, and to turn more towards the fouth-weft. In carrying on thefe operations, Alexander marched through one of the richeft and beft peopled countries of India, now called the Panjab, from the five great rivers by which it is watered; and as we know that this march was performed in the rainy feafon, when even Indian armies cannot keep the field, it gives an high idea both of Alexander's perfevering fpirit, and of the extraordinary vigour and hardinefs of conftitution which foldiers, in ancient times, derived from the united effects of gymnaftic exercife and military difcipline. In every ftep of his progrefs, objects no lefs ftriking than new prefented themfelves to Alexander. The magnitude of the Indus, even after he had feen the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Tigris, muft have filled him with furprife [a]. No country he had hitherto vifited was fo populous and well cultivated, or abounded in fo many valuable productions of nature and of art, as that part of India through which he had led his army. But when he was informed in every place, and probably with exaggerated defcription, how much the Indus was inferior to the Ganges, and how far all that he had hitherto beheld was furpaffed in the happy regions through which that great river flows, it is not wonderful that his eagernefs to view and to take poffeffion of them fhould have prompted him to affemble his foldiers, and to propofe that

[a] Strab. lib. xv. p. 1027. C. & note 5. Caufab.

SECT. I.

they ſhould reſume their march towards that quarter where wealth, dominion, and fame awaited them. But they had already done ſo much, and had ſuffered ſo greatly, eſpecially from inceſſant rains and extenſive inundations, that their patience as well as ſtrength were exhauſted [b], and with one voice they refuſed to advance farther. In this reſolution they perſiſted with ſuch ſullen obſtinacy, that Alexander, though poſſeſſed in the higheſt degree of every quality that gains an aſcendant over the minds of military men, was obliged to yield, and to iſſue orders for marching back to Perſia [c].

The ſcene of this memorable tranſaction was on the banks of the Hyphaſis, the modern Beyah, which was the utmoſt limit of Alexander's progreſs in India. From this it is manifeſt, that he did not traverſe the whole extent of the Panjab. Its ſouth-weſt boundary is formed by a river anciently known by the name of Hyſudrus, and now by that of the Setlege, to which Alexander never approached nearer than the ſouthern bank of the Hyphaſis, where he erected twelve ſtupendous altars, which he intended as a monument of his exploits, and which (if we may believe the biographer of Apollonius Tyanæus) were ſtill remaining, with legible inſcriptions, when that fantaſtic ſophiſt viſited India, three hundred and ſeventy-three years after Alexander's expedition [d]. The breadth of the Panjab, from Ludhana on the Setlege to Attock on the Indus, is computed to be two hundred and fifty-nine geographical

[b] See NOTE IV.

[c] Arrian, v. c. 24, 25.

[d] Philoſtr. Vita Apollon. lib. ii. c. 43. edit. Olear. Lipſ. 1709.

5 miles,

miles, in a ſtraight line; and Alexander's march, computed in the ſame manner, did not extend above two hundred miles. But, both as he advanced and returned, his troops were ſo ſpread over the country, and often acted in ſo many ſeparate diviſions, and all his movements were ſo exactly meaſured and delineated by men of ſcience, whom he kept in pay for the purpoſe, that he acquired a very extenſive and accurate knowledge of that part of India [e].

WHEN, upon his return, he reached the banks of the Hydaſpes, he found that the officers to whom he had given it in charge to build and collect as many veſſels as poſſible, had executed his orders with ſuch activity and ſucceſs that they had aſſembled a numerous fleet. As amidſt the hurry of war, and the rage of conqueſt, he never loſt ſight of his pacific and commercial ſchemes, the deſtination of this fleet was to ſail down the Indus to the ocean, and from its mouth to proceed to the Perſian Gulf, that a communication by ſea might be opened with India and the centre of his dominions.

THE conduct of this expedition was committed to Nearchus, an officer equal to that important truſt. But as Alexander was ambitious to acquire fame of every kind, and fond of engageing in new and ſplendid undertakings, he himſelf accompanied Nearchus in his navigation down the river. The armament was, indeed, ſo great and magnificent, as deſerved to be commanded by the conqueror of Aſia. It was compoſed of an

[e] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17.

SECT. I.

army of a hundred and twenty thousand men, and two hundred elephants, and of a fleet of near two thousand vessels, various in burden and form [f]; on board of which one-third of the troops embarked, while the remainder marching in two divisions, one on the right, and the other on the left, of the river, accompanied them in their progress. As they advanced, the nations on each side were either compelled or persuaded to submit. Retarded by the various operations in which this engaged him, as well as by the slow navigation of such a fleet as he conducted, Alexander was above nine months before he reached the ocean [g].

ALEXANDER's progress in India, in this line of direction, was far more considerable than that which he made by the route we formerly traced; and when we attend to the various movements of his troops, the number of cities which they took, and the different states which they subdued, he may be said not only to have viewed, but to have explored, the countries through which he passed. This part of India has been so little frequented by Europeans in later times, that neither the position of places, nor their distances, can be ascertained with the same accuracy as in the interior provinces, or even in the Panjab. But from the researches of Major Rennell, carried on with no less discernment than industry, the distance of that place on the Hydaspes, where Alexander fitted out his fleet from the ocean, cannot be less than a thousand British miles. Of this extensive region

[f] See NOTE V. [g] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1014.

a con-

a confiderable portion, particularly the upper Delta, ftretching from the capital of the ancient Malli, now Moultan, to Patala, the modern Tatta, is diftinguifhed for its fertility and population [h].

SECT. I.

SOON after he reached the ocean, Alexander, fatisfied with having accomplifhed this arduous undertaking, led his army by land back to Perfia. The command of the fleet, with a confiderable body of troops on board of it, he left to Nearchus, who, after a coafting voyage of feven months, conducted it fafely up the Perfian Gulf into the Euphrates [i].

IN this manner did Alexander firft open the knowledge of India to the people of Europe, and an extenfive diftrict of it was furveyed with greater accuracy than could have been expected from the fhort time he remained in that country. Fortunately an exact account, not only of his military operations, but of every thing worthy of notice in the countries where they were carried on, was recorded in the Memoirs or Journals of three of his principal officers, Ptolemy the fon of Lagus, Ariftobulus, and Nearchus. The two former have not indeed reached our times, but it is probable that the moft important facts which they contained, are preferved, as Arrian profeffes to have followed them as his guides in his Hiftory of the Expedition of Alexander [k]; a work which, though compofed long after Greece had loft its liberty, and in an age when

[h] Rennell Mem. 68, &c.
[i] Plin. Nat. Hift. lib. vi. c. 23. See NOTE VI.
[k] Arrian, lib. i. in proemio.

SECT. I. genius and tafte were on the decline, is not unworthy the pureft times of Attic literature.

WITH refpect to the general ftate of India, we learn from thefe writers, that in the age of Alexander, though there was not eftablifhed in it any powerful empire, refembling that which in modern times ftretched its dominion from the Indus almoft to Cape Comorin, it was even then formed into monarchies of confiderable extent. The king of the Prafij was prepared on the banks of the Ganges to oppofe the Macedonians, with an army of twenty thoufand cavalry, two thoufand armed chariots, and a great number of elephants [l]. The territory of which Alexander conftituted Porus the fovereign, is faid to have contained no fewer than two thoufand towns [m]. Even in the moft reftricted fenfe that can be given to the vague indefinite appellations of *nations* and *towns*, an idea is conveyed of a very great degree of population. As the fleet failed down the river, the country on each fide was found to be in no refpect inferior to that of which the government was committed to Porus.

IT was likewife from the Memoirs of the fame officers that Europe derived its firft authentic information concerning the climate, the foil, the productions, and the inhabitants of India; and in a country where the manners, the cuftoms, and even the drefs of the people are almoft as permanent and invariable as the face of nature itfelf, it is wonderful how exactly the defcriptions given by Alexander's officers delineate what we now behold in India, at the diftance of two thoufand years.

[l] Diod. Sicul. lib. xvii. p. 232. [m] Arrian, lib. vi. c. 2.

The

The ftated change of feafons, now known by the name of *Monfoons;* the periodical rains; the fwelling of the rivers; the inundations which thefe occafion; the appearance of the country during their continuance; are particularly mentioned and defcribed. No lefs accurate are the defcriptions which they have given of the inhabitants, their delicate and flender form, their dark complexion, their black uncurled hair, their garments of cotton, their living entirely upon vegetable food, their divifion into feparate tribes or *cafts*, the members of which never intermarry, the cuftom of wives burning themfelves with their deceafed hufbands, and many other particulars, in all which they perfectly refemble the modern Hindoos. To enter into any detail with refpect to thefe in this place would be premature; but as the fubject, though curious and interefting, will lead unavoidably into difcuffions not well fuited to the nature of an hiftorical work, I fhall referve my ideas concerning it for an Appendix, which I purpofe to annex to this Difquifition; and hope they may contribute to throw fome additional light upon the origin and nature of the commerce with India.

MUCH as the Weftern world was indebted for its knowledge of India to the expedition of Alexander, it was only a fmall portion of that vaft continent which he explored. His operations did not extend beyond the modern province of Lahor, and the countries on the banks of the Indus from Moultan to the fea. Thefe, however, were furveyed with that degree of accuracy which I have already defcribed; and it is a circumftance not unworthy of notice, that this diftrict of India which Europeans

firft

SECT. I. firſt entered, and with which they were beſt acquainted in ancient times, is now leſs known than almoſt any part of that continent [n], neither commerce nor war, to which, in every age, geography is chiefly indebted for its improvement, having led any nation of Europe to frequent or explore it.

If an untimely death had not put a period to the reign of the Macedonian hero, India, we have reaſon to think, would have been more fully explored by the ancients, and the European dominion would have been eſtabliſhed there two thouſand years ſooner. When Alexander invaded India, he had ſomething more in view than a tranſient incurſion. It was his object to annex that extenſive and opulent country to his empire, and though the refractory ſpirit of his army obliged him, at that time, to ſuſpend the proſecution of his plan, he was far from relinquiſhing it. To exhibit a general view of the meaſures which he adopted for this purpoſe, and to point out their propriety and probable ſucceſs, is not foreign from the ſubject of this Diſquiſition, and will convey a more juſt idea than is uſually entertained, of the original genius and extent of political wiſdom which diſtinguiſhed this illuſtrious man.

When Alexander became maſter of the Perſian empire, he early perceived, that with all the power of his hereditary dominions, re-inforced by the troops which the aſcendant he had acquired over the various ſtates of Greece might enable him to raiſe there, he could not hope to retain in ſubjection territories ſo extenſive and populous; that to render his authority

[n] Rennell Mem. 114.

ſecure

ſecure and permanent, it muſt be eſtabliſhed in the affection of the nations which he had ſubdued, and maintained by their arms; and that in order to acquire this advantage, all diſtinctions between the victors and vanquiſhed muſt be aboliſhed, and his European and Aſiatic ſubjects muſt be incorporated, and become one people, by obeying the ſame laws, and by adopting the ſame manners, inſtitutions, and diſcipline.

LIBERAL as this plan of policy was, and well adapted to accompliſh what he had in view, nothing could be more repugnant to the ideas and prejudices of his countrymen. The Greeks had ſuch an high opinion of the pre-eminence to which they were raiſed by civilization and ſcience, that they ſeem hardly to have acknowledged the reſt of mankind to be of the ſame ſpecies with themſelves. To every other people they gave the degrading appellation of Barbarians, and, in conſequence of their own boaſted ſuperiority, they aſſerted a right of dominion over them, in the ſame manner as the ſoul has over the body, and men have over irrational animals. Extravagant as this pretenſion may now appear, it found admiſſion, to the diſgrace of ancient philoſophy, into all the ſchools. Ariſtotle, full of this opinion, in ſupport of which he employs arguments more ſubtle than ſolid [o], adviſed Alexander to govern the Greeks like ſubjects, and the Barbarians as ſlaves; to conſider the former as companions, the latter as creatures of an inferior nature [p]. But the ſentiments of the pupil were more enlarged

[o] Ariſtot. Polit. i. c. 3—7.

[p] Plut. de Fortuna Alex. Orat. i. p. 302. vol. vii. edit. Reiſke. Strab. lib. i. p. 116. A.

SECT. I. than thofe of his mafter, and his experience in governing men taught the monarch what the fpeculative fcience of the philofopher did not difcover. Soon after the victory at Arbela, Alexander himfelf, and by his perfuafion many of his officers, affumed the Perfian drefs, and conformed to feveral of their cuftoms. At the fame time he encouraged the Perfian nobles to imitate the manners of the Macedonians, to learn the Greek language, and to acquire a relifh for the beauties of the elegant writers in that tongue, which were then univerfally ftudied and admired. In order to render the union more complete, he refolved to marry one of the daughters of Darius, and chofe wives for a hundred of his principal officers in the moft illuftrious Perfian families. Their nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and feftivity, and with high exultation of the conquered people. In imitation of them, above ten thoufand Macedonians of inferior rank married Perfian women, to each of whom Alexander gave nuptial prefents, as a teftimony of his approbation of their conduct[q].

But affiduoufly as Alexander laboured to unite his European and Afiatic fubjects by the moft indiffoluble ties, he did not truft entirely to the fuccefs of that meafure for the fecurity of his new conquefts. In every province which he fubdued, he made choice of proper ftations, where he built and fortified cities, in which he placed garrifons, compofed partly of fuch of the natives as conformed to the Grecian manners and difcipline, and partly of fuch of his European fubjects, as were worn out

[q] Arrian, lib. vii. c. 4. Plut. de Fort. Alex. p. 304. See NOTE VII.

with the fatigues of ſervice, and wiſhed-for repoſe, and a permanent eſtabliſhment. Theſe cities were numerous, and ſerved not only as a chain of poſts to keep open the communication between the different provinces of his dominions, but as places of ſtrength to over-awe and curb the conquered people. Thirty thouſand of his new ſubjects who had been diſciplined in theſe cities, and armed after the European faſhion, appeared before Alexander in Suſa, and were formed by him into that compact ſolid body of infantry, known by the name of the Phalanx, which conſtituted the ſtrength of a Macedonian army. But in order to ſecure entire authority over this new corps, as well as to render it more effective, he appointed that every officer in it entruſted with command, either ſuperior or ſubaltern, ſhould be European. As the ingenuity of mankind naturally has recourſe in ſimilar ſituations to the ſame expedients, the European powers, who now in their Indian territories employ numerous bodies of the natives in their ſervice, have, in forming the eſtabliſhment of theſe troops, adopted the ſame maxims; and, probably without knowing it, have modelled their battalions of Seapoys upon the ſame principles as Alexander did his Phalanx of Perſians.

The farther Alexander puſhed his conqueſts from the banks of the Euphrates, which may be conſidered as the center of his dominions, he found it neceſſary to build and to fortify a greater number of cities. Several of theſe to the Eaſt and South of the Caſpian ſea are mentioned by ancient authors; and in India itſelf, he founded two cities on the banks of the Hydaſpes, and a third on the Aceſines, both navigable rivers, which, after

SECT. I.

uniting their ſtreams, fall into the Indus[p]. From the choice of ſuch ſituations, it is obvious that he intended, by means of theſe cities, to keep open a communication with India, not only by land, but by ſea. It was chiefly with a view to the latter of theſe objects, (as I have already obſerved,) that he examined the navigation of the Indus with ſo much attention. With the ſame view, on his return to Suſa, he, in perſon, ſurveyed the courſe of the Euphrates and Tigris, and gave directions to remove the cataracts or dams, with which the ancient monarchs of Perſia, induced by a peculiar precept of their religion, which enjoined them to guard with the utmoſt care againſt defiling any of the elements, had conſtructed near the mouths of theſe rivers, in order to ſhut out their ſubjects from any acceſs to the ocean[q]. By opening the navigation in this manner, he propoſed, that the valuable commodities of India ſhould be conveyed from the Perſian Gulf into the interior parts of his Aſiatic dominions, while by the Arabian Gulf they ſhould be carried to Alexandria, and diſtributed to the reſt of the world.

GRAND and extenſive as theſe ſchemes were, the precautions employed, and the arrangements made for carrying them into execution, were ſo various and ſo proper, that Alexander had good reaſon to entertain ſanguine hopes of their proving ſucceſsful. At the time when the mutinous ſpirit of his ſoldiers obliged him to relinquiſh his operations in India, he was not thirty years of age complete. At this enterprizing period of life, a prince, of a ſpirit ſo active, perſevering, and indefati-

[p] See NOTE VIII.

[q] Arrian, lib. vi. c. 7. Strab. lib. xvi. p. 1074. &c. See NOTE IX.

gable, muſt have ſoon found means to reſume a favourite meaſure on which he had been long intent. If he had invaded India a ſecond time, he would not, as formerly, have been obliged to force his way through hoſtile and unexplored regions, oppoſed at every ſtep by nations and tribes of Barbarians, whoſe names had never reached Greece. All Aſia, from the ſhores of the Ionian ſea to the banks of the Hyphaſis, would then have been ſubject to his dominion; and through that immenſe ſtretch of country he had eſtabliſhed ſuch a chain of cities, or fortified ſtations[r], that his armies might have continued their march with ſafety, and have found a regular ſucceſſion of magazines provided for their ſubſiſtence. Nor would it have been difficult for him to bring into the field forces ſufficient to have atchieved the conqueſt of a country ſo populous and extenſive as India. Having armed and diſciplined his ſubjects in the Eaſt like Europeans, they would have been ambitious to imitate and to equal their inſtructors, and Alexander might have drawn recruits, not from his ſcanty domains in Macedonia and Greece, but from the vaſt regions of Aſia, which, in every age, has covered the earth, and aſtoniſhed mankind with its numerous armies. When at the head of ſuch a formidable power he had reached the confines of India, he might have entered it under circumſtances very different from thoſe in his firſt expedition. He had ſecured a firm footing there, partly by means of the garriſons which he left in the three cities which he had built and fortified, and partly by his alliance with Taxiles and Porus. Theſe two Indian princes, won by Alexander's humanity and beneficence, which, as they were

[r] See NOTE X.

SECT. I. virtues feldom difplayed in the ancient mode of carrying on war, excited of courfe an higher degree of admiration and gratitude, had continued fteady in their attachment to the Macedonians. Re-inforced by their troops, and guided by their information as well as by the experience which he had acquired in his former campaigns, Alexander muft have made rapid progrefs in a country, where every invader, from his time to the prefent age, has proved fuccefsful.

But this and all his other fplendid fchemes were terminated at once by his untimely death. In confequence of that, however, events took place, which illuftrate and confirm the juftnefs of the preceding fpeculations and conjectures by evidence the moft ftriking and fatisfactory. When that great empire, which the fuperior genius of Alexander had kept united and in fubjection, no longer felt his fuperintending controul, it broke into pieces, and its various provinces were feized by his principal officers, and parcelled out among them. From ambition, emulation, and perfonal animofity, they foon turned their arms againft one another; and as feveral of the leaders were equally eminent for political abilities and for military fkill, the conteft was maintained long, and carried on with frequent viciffitudes of fortune. Amidft the various convulfions and revolutions which thefe occafioned, it was found that the meafures of Alexander for the prefervation of his conquefts had been concerted with fuch fagacity, that upon the final reftoration of tranquillity, the Macedonian dominion continued to be eftablifhed in every part of Afia, and not one province had fhaken off the yoke. Even India, the moft remote

mote of Alexander's conqueſts, quietly ſubmitted to Pytho the ſon of Agenor, and afterwards to Seleucus, who ſucceſſively obtained dominion over that part of Aſia. Porus and Taxiles, notwithſtanding the death of their benefactor, neither declined ſubmiſſion to the authority of the Macedonians, nor made any attempt to recover independence. SECT. I.

DURING the conteſts for power and ſuperiority among the ſucceſſors of Alexander, Seleucus, who, in every effort of enterpriſing ambition, was inferior to none of them, having rendered himſelf maſter of all the provinces of the Perſian empire comprehended under the name of Upper Aſia, conſidered thoſe countries of India which had been ſubdued by Alexander, as belonging to that portion of the Macedonian empire of which he was now the ſovereign. Seleucus, like all the officers formed under Alexander, entertained ſuch high ideas of the advantages which might be derived from a commercial intercourſe with India, as induced him to march into that country, partly with a view of eſtabliſhing his own authority there, and partly in order to curb Sandracottus, who having lately acquired the ſovereignty of the Praſij, a powerful nation on the banks of the Ganges, threatened to attack the Macedonians, whoſe Indian territories bordered on his dominions. Unfortunately, no account of this expedition, which ſeems to have been ſplendid and ſucceſsful, has reached our times. All we know of it is, that he advanced conſiderably beyond the utmoſt boundary of Alexander's progreſs in India [a], and would probably have proceeded much farther if he had not been conſtrained to ſtop

[a] See NOTE XI.

SECT. I. ſhort in his career in order to oppoſe Antigonus, who was preparing to invade his dominions at the head of a formidable army. Before he begun his march towards the Euphrates, he concluded a treaty with Sandracottus; in conſequence of which, that monarch quietly retained the kingdom he had acquired. But the power and poſſeſſions of the Macedonians ſeem to have remained unimpaired during the reign of Seleucus, which terminated forty-two years after the death of Alexander.

With a view of cultivating a friendly intercourſe with Sandracottus, Seleucus made choice of Megaſthenes, an officer, who, from his having accompanied Alexander in his expedition into India, had ſome knowledge of the ſtate of the country, and the manners of its inhabitants, and ſent him as his ambaſſador to Palibothra [t]. In this famous capital of the Praſij, ſituated on the banks of the Ganges, Megaſthenes reſided ſeveral years, and was probably the firſt European who ever beheld that mighty river, far ſuperior to any of the ancient continent in magnitude [u], and no leſs diſtinguiſhed by the fertility of the countries through which it flows. This journey of Megaſthenes to Palibothra made Europeans acquainted with a large extent of country, of which they had not hitherto any knowledge; for Alexander did not advance farther towards the ſouth-eaſt, than that part of the river Hydraotes or Raûvee, where the modern city of Lahore is ſituated, and Palibothra, the ſite of which, as it is a capital poſition in the geography of ancient India, I have inveſtigated with the utmoſt attention, appears

[t] Strabo, lib. ii. p. 121, &c. Arrian, Hiſt. Ind. paſſim.
[u] See NOTE XII.

to

to me the ſame with that of the modern city of Allahabad, at the confluence of the two great rivers, Jumna and Ganges[x]. As the road from Lahore to Allahabad runs through ſome of the moſt cultivated and opulent provinces of India, the more the country was explored the idea of its value roſe higher. Accordingly, what Megaſthenes obſerved during his progreſs to Palibothra, and his reſidence there, made ſuch an impreſſion upon his own mind, as induced him to publiſh an ample account of India, in order to make his countrymen more thoroughly acquainted with its importance. From his writings the ancients ſeem to have derived almoſt all their knowledge of the interior ſtate of India, and from comparing the three moſt ample accounts of it, by Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, and Arrian, they appear manifeſtly, from their near reſemblance, to be a tranſcript of his words. But, unfortunately, Megaſthenes was ſo fond of the marvellous, that he mingled with the truths which he related many extravagant fictions; and to him may be traced up the fabulous tales of men with ears ſo large that they could wrap themſelves up in them, of others with a ſingle eye, without mouths, without noſes, with long feet, and toes turned backwards, of people only three ſpans in height, of wild men with heads in the ſhape of a wedge, of ants as large as foxes that dug up gold, and many other things no leſs wonderful[y]. The extracts from his narrative which have been tranſmitted to us by Strabo, Arrian, and other writers, ſeem not to be entitled to credit, unleſs when they are ſupported by internal evidence, and confirmed by the teſtimony of other ancient authors, or when they coincide with the experience of modern times. His account, however, of the dimenſions and geography

[x] See NOTE XIII.

[y] Strabo, lib. xx. 1032. A. 1037. C.

SECT. I.

graphy of India, is curious and accurate. His defcription of the power and opulence of the Prafij perfectly refembles that which might have been given of fome of the greater ftates in the modern Indoftan, before the eftablifhment of the Mahomedan or European power in India, and is confonant to the accounts which Alexander had received concerning that people. He was informed that they were ready to oppofe him on the banks of the Ganges, with an army confifting of twenty thoufand cavalry, two hundred thoufand infantry, and two thoufand armed chariots [z]; and Megafthenes relates, that he had an audience of Sandracottus in a place where he was encamped with an army of four hundred thoufand men [a]. The enormous dimenfions which he affigns to Palibothra, of no lefs than ten miles in length, and two in breadth, and furrounded by walls in which there were five hundred and feventy towers, and fixty-four gates, would probably have been ranked by Europeans among the wonders which he delighted to relate, if they were not now well acquainted with the rambling manner in which the cities of India are built, and did not know with certainty that, both in former and in the prefent times, it might boaft of cities ftill more extenfive [b].

THIS embaffy of Megafthenes to Sandracottus, and another of Daimachus to his fon and fucceffor Allitrochidas, are the laft tranfactions of the Syrian monarchs with India, of which we have any account [c]. Nor can we either fix with accuracy the

[z] Diod. Sicul. lib. xvii. p. 232. Q. Curt. lib. ix. c. 2.
[a] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1035. C.
[b] Rennell Mem. 49, 50.
[c] See NOTE XIV.

time,

time, or defcribe the manner in which their poffeffions in India were wrefted from them. It is probable that they were obliged to abandon that country foon after the death of Seleucus [c]. SECT. I.

But though the great monarchs of Syria loft, about this period, thofe provinces in India which had been fubject to their dominion, the Greeks in a fmaller kingdom, compofed of fome fragments of Alexander's empire, ftill maintained an intercourfe with India, and even made fome confiderable acquifition of territory there. This was the kingdom of Bactria, originally fubject to Seleucus, but wrefted from his fon or grandfon, and rendered an independent ftate, about fixty-nine years after the death of Alexander. Concerning the tranfactions of this kingdom, we muft reft fatisfied with gleaning a few imperfect hints in ancient authors. From them we learn that its commerce with India was great; that the conquefts of the Bactrian kings in that country were more extenfive than thofe of Alexander himfelf, and particularly that they recovered poffeffion of the diftrict near the mouth of the Indus, which he had fubdued [d]. Each of the fix princes who reigned in Bactria, carried on military operations in India with fuch fuccefs, that they penetrated far into the interior part of the country, and proud of the conquefts which they had made, as well as of the extenfive dominions over which they reigned, fome of them

[c] Juftin. lib. xv. c. 4.

[d] Strabo, lib. xi. 785. D. lib. xv. 1006. B. Juftin. lib. xli. c. 4. Bayer Hift. Regni Græcor. Bactriani, paffim.

SECT. I. assumed the lofty title of *Great King*, which distinguished the Persian monarchs in the days of their highest splendor. But we should not have known how long this kingdom of Bactria subsisted, or in what manner it terminated, if M. de Guignes had not called in the historians of China to supply the defects of the Greek and Roman writers. By them we are informed, that about one hundred and twenty-six years before the Christian æra, a powerful horde of Tartars, pushed from their native seats on the confines of China, and obliged to move towards the west by the pressure of a more numerous body that rolled on behind them, passed the Jaxartes, and pouring in upon Bactria, like an irresistible torrent, overwhelmed that kingdom, and put an end to the dominion of the [e] Greeks there, after it had been established near one hundred and thirty years [f].

From this time until the close of the fifteenth century, when the Portuguese, by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, opened a new communication with the East, and carried their victorious arms into every part of India, no European power acquired territory, or established its dominion there. During this long period, of more than sixteen hundred years, all schemes of conquest in India seem to have been totally relinquished, and nothing more was aimed at by any nation, than to secure an intercourse of trade with that opulent country.

It was in Egypt that the seat of this intercourse was established; and it is not without surprise that we observe how

[e] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxv. p. 17, &c. [f] See NOTE XV.

soon

SECT. I.

ſoon and how regularly the commerce with the Eaſt came to be carried on by that channel, in which the ſagacity of Alexander deſtined it to flow. Ptolemy, the ſon of Lagus, as ſoon as he took poſſeſſion of Egypt, eſtabliſhed the ſeat of government in Alexandria. By ſome exertions of authority, and many acts of liberality, but chiefly by the fame of his mild and equal adminiſtration, he drew ſuch a number of inhabitants to this favourite reſidence, that it ſoon became a populous and wealthy city. As Ptolemy deſerved and had poſſeſſed the confidence of Alexander more perfectly than any of his officers, he knew well that his chief object in founding Alexandria was to ſecure the advantages ariſing from the trade with India. A long and proſperous reign was favourable to the proſecution of that object, and though ancient authors have not enabled us to trace the ſteps which the firſt Ptolemy took for this purpoſe, we have a ſtriking evidence of his extraordinary attention to naval affairs, in his erecting the light-houſe on the iſland of Pharos, at the mouth of the harbour of Alexandria [g], a work of ſuch magnificence as to be reckoned one of the ſeven wonders of the world. With reſpect to the commercial arrangements of his ſon Ptolemy Philadelphus, we have more perfect information. In order to bring the trade with India (which began to revive at Tyre, its ancient ſtation [h],) to centre in Alexandria, he ſet about forming a canal, an hundred cubits in breadth, and thirty cubits in depth, between Arſinoe on the Red Sea, not far from the ſituation of the modern Suez, and the Peluſiac or eaſtern branch of the Nile, by means of which the productions of India might have been conveyed to that capital wholly by

[g] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1140. C. [h] Ibid. lib. xvi. 1089. A.

 water.

SECT. I.

water. But either on account of ſome danger apprehended from completing it, that work was never finiſhed; or from the ſlow and dangerous navigation towards the northern extremity of the Red Sea, this canal was found to be of ſo little uſe, that in order to facilitate the communication with India, he built a city on the weſt coaſt of that ſea, almoſt under the Tropic, to which he gave the name of Berenice[i]. This new city ſoon became the ſtaple of the trade with India[k]. From Berenice the goods were tranſported by land to Coptos, a city three miles diſtant from the Nile, but which had a communication with that river by a navigable canal, of which there are ſtill ſome remains[l], and thence carried down the ſtream to Alexandria. The diſtance between Berenice and Coptos was, according to Pliny, two hundred and fifty-eight Roman miles, and the road lay through the deſart of Thebais, almoſt entirely deſtitute of water. But the attention of a powerful monarch made proviſion for ſupplying this want, by ſearching for ſprings, and wherever theſe were found he built inns, or more probably in the eaſtern ſtile caravanſeras, for the accommodation of merchants[m]. In this channel the intercourſe between the Eaſt and Weſt continued to be carried on during two hundred and fifty years, as long as Egypt remained an independent kingdom.

THE ſhips deſtined for India took their departure from Berenice, and ſailing, according to the ancient mode of navigation,

[i] Strabo, lib. xvii. 1156. D. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 29.
[k] See NOTE XVI.
[l] D'Anville Mem. de l' Egypte, p. 21.
[m] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1157. D. 1169.

gation, along the Arabian ſhore, to the promontory Syagrus (now Cape Raſalgate), held their courſe along the coaſt of Perſia, either directly to Pattala (now Tatta) at the head of the lower Delta of the Indus, or to ſome other emporium on the weſt coaſt of India. To this part of India which Alexander had viſited and ſubdued, the commerce under the protection of the Egyptian monarchs ſeems to have been confined for a conſiderable time. Afterwards a more convenient courſe was followed, and from Cape Raſalgate veſſels ſailed in a direct courſe to Zizerus. This, according to M. de Monteſquieu[n], was the kingdom of Sigertis, on the ſea coaſt adjacent to the mouth of the Indus, conquered by the Greek monarchs of Bactria; according to Major Rennell[o], it was a port on the northern part of the Malabar coaſt. Ancient authors have not conveyed ſuch information as will enable us to pronounce with certainty, which of theſe two oppoſite opinions is beſt founded. Nor can we point out with accuracy, what were the other ports in India which the merchants from Berenice frequented, when that trade was firſt opened. As they ſailed in veſſels of ſmall burden, which crept timidly along the coaſt, it is probable that their voyages were circumſcribed within very narrow limits, and that under the Ptolemies no conſiderable progreſs was made in the diſcovery of India[p].

FROM this monopoly of the commerce by ſea between the eaſt and weſt, which Egypt long enjoyed, it derived that

[n] L'Eſprit des Loix, lib. xxi. c. 7.

[o] Introduct. p. xxxvii.

[p] See NOTE XVII.

extra-

SECT. I. extraordinary degree of opulence and power for which it was conſpicuous. In modern times, acquainted with the vigilant and enterprizing activity of commercial rivalſhip, there is hardly any circumſtance in ancient ſtory which appears more ſurpriſing, than that the ſovereigns of Egypt ſhould have been permitted to engroſs this lucrative trade without competition, or any attempt to wreſt it out of their hands; eſpecially as the powerful monarchs of Syria might, from the Perſian Gulf, have carried on an intercourſe with the ſame parts of India, by a ſhorter and ſafer courſe of navigation. Different conſiderations ſeem to have induced them ſo tamely to relinquiſh all the obvious advantages of this commerce. The kings of Egypt, by their attention to maritime affairs, had formed a powerful fleet, which gave them ſuch decided command of the ſea, that they could have cruſhed with eaſe any rival in trade. No commercial intercourſe ſeems ever to have been carried on by ſea between Perſia and India. The Perſians had ſuch an inſuperable averſion to that element, or were ſo much afraid of foreign invaſion, that their monarchs (as I have already obſerved) obſtructed the navigation of the great rivers, which gave acceſs to the interior parts of the country, by artificial works. As their ſubjects, however, were no leſs deſirous than the people around them, to poſſeſs the valuable productions and elegant manufactures of India, theſe were conveyed to all the parts of their extenſive dominions by land-carriage. The commodities deſtined for the ſupply of the northern provinces, were tranſported on camels from the banks of the Indus to thoſe of the Oxus, down the ſtream of which they were carried to the Caſpian ſea, and diſtributed,

4 partly

partly by land-carriage, and partly by navigable rivers, through the different countries, bounded on one hand by the Caſpian, and on the other by the Euxine, ſea[q]. The commodities of India intended for the ſouthern and interior provinces, proceeded by land from the Caſpian gates to ſome of the great rivers, by which they were circulated through every part of the country. This was the ancient mode of intercourſe with India, while the Perſian empire was governed by its native princes; and it has been obſerved in every age, that when any branch of commerce has got into a certain channel, although it may be neither the moſt proper nor the moſt commodious one, it requires long time, and conſiderable efforts, to give it a different direction[r].

To all theſe reaſons for ſuffering the monarchs of Egypt to continue in the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of the trade with India by ſea, another may be added. Many of the ancients, by an error in geography extremely unaccountable, and in which they perſiſted, notwithſtanding repeated opportunities of obtaining more accurate information, believed the Caſpian ſea to be a branch of the great Northern Ocean, and the kings of Syria might hope by that means to open a communication with Europe, and to circulate through it the valuable productions of the Eaſt, without intruding into thoſe ſeas, the navigation of which the Egyptian monarchs ſeemed to conſider as their excluſive right. This idea had been early formed by the Greeks, when they became maſters of Aſia. Seleucus Nicator,

[q] Strabo, lib. xii. 776. D. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17.
[r] See NOTE XVIII.

the

SECT. I. the firſt and moſt ſagacious of the Syrian kings, at the time when he was aſſaſſinated, entertained thoughts of forming a junction between the Caſpian and Euxine ſeas by a canal *, and if this could have been effected, his ſubjects, beſides the extenſion of their trade in Europe, might have ſupplied all the countries in the North of Aſia, on the coaſt of the Euxine ſea, as well as many of thoſe which ſtretch eaſtward from the Caſpian, with the productions of India. As thoſe countries, though now thinly inhabited by a miſerable race of men, deſtitute of induſtry and of wealth, were in ancient times extremely populous, and filled with great and opulent cities, this muſt have been conſidered as a branch of commerce of ſuch magnitude and value, as to render the ſecuring of it an object worthy the attention of the moſt powerful monarch.

But while the monarchs of Egypt and Syria laboured with emulation and ardour to ſecure to their ſubjects all the advantages of the Indian trade, a power aroſe in the Weſt which proved fatal to both. The Romans, by the vigour of their military inſtitutions, and the wiſdom of their political conduct, having rendered themſelves maſters of all Italy and Sicily, ſoon overturned the rival republic of Carthage, ſubjected Ma-
A. C. 65. cedonia and Greece, extended their dominion over Syria, and at laſt turned their victorious arms againſt Egypt, the only kingdom remaining of thoſe eſtabliſhed by the ſucceſſors of Alexander the Great. After a ſeries of events, which belong not to the ſubject of this Diſquiſition, Egypt was annexed

* Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 11.

6 to

SECT. I. A. C. 30.

to the Roman empire, and reduced into the form of a Roman province by Auguſtus. Aware of its great importance, he, with that provident ſagacity which diſtinguiſhes his character, not only reſerved it as one of the provinces ſubject immediately to Imperial authority, but by various precautions, well known to every ſcholar, provided for its ſecurity. This extraordinary ſolicitude ſeems to have proceeded not only from conſidering Egypt as one of the chief granaries on which the capital depended for ſubſiſtence, but as the ſeat of that lucrative commerce which had enabled its ancient monarchs to amaſs ſuch enormous wealth, as excited the admiration and envy of other princes, and produced, when brought into the treaſury of the empire, an alteration in the value of property, and the ſtate of manners, in Rome itſelf.

A N

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION II.

Intercourse with India, from the Establishment of the Roman Dominion in Egypt, to the Conquest of that Kingdom by the Mahomedans.

UPON the conquest of Egypt by the Romans, and the reduction of that kingdom to a province of their empire, the trade with India continued to be carried on in the same mode, under their powerful protection: Rome, enriched with the spoils and the tribute of almost all the known world, had acquired a taste for luxuries of every kind. Among people of this description, the productions of India have SECT. II.

always

SECT. II.

always been held in the higheſt eſtimation. The capital of the greateſt empire ever eſtabliſhed in Europe, filled with citizens who had now no occupation, but to enjoy and diſſipate the wealth accumulated by their anceſtors, demanded every thing elegant, rare, or coſtly, which that remote region could furniſh, in order to ſupport its pomp, or heighten its pleaſures. To ſupply this demand, new and extraordinary efforts became requiſite, and the commerce with India increaſed to a degree, which (as I have obſerved in another place[a]) will appear aſtoniſhing even to the preſent age, in which that branch of trade has been extended far beyond the practice or conception of any former period.

Besides the Indian commodities imported into the capital of the empire from Egypt, the Romans received an additional ſupply of them by another mode of conveyance. From the earlieſt times, there ſeems to have been ſome communication between Meſopotamia, and other provinces on the banks of the Euphrates, and thoſe parts of Syria and Paleſtine, which lay near the Mediterranean. The migration of Abram from Ur, of the Chaldees to Sichem in the land of Canaan, is an inſtance of this[b]. The journey through the deſart, which ſeparated theſe countries, was much facilitated by its affording a ſtation abounding with water, and capable of cultivation. As the intercourſe increaſed, the poſſeſſion of this ſtation became an object of ſo much importance, that Solomon, when he turned his attention towards the extenſion of commerce among his

[a] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 25. [b] Geneſ. xi. and xii.

ſubjects,

ſubjects, built a fenced city there[c]. Its Syrian name of *Tadmor* in the wilderneſs, and its Greek one of *Palmyra*, are both deſcriptive of its ſituation in a ſpot adorned with palm-trees. This is plentifully ſupplied with water, and ſurrounded by a portion of fertile land, which (though of no great extent) render it a delightful habitation in the midſt of barren ſands and an inhoſpitable deſart. Its happy poſition, at the diſtance of little more than ſixty miles from the river Euphrates, and of two hundred and three miles from the neareſt coaſt of the Mediterranean, induced its inhabitants to enter with ardour into the trade of conveying commodities from one of theſe to the other. As the moſt valuable productions of India, brought up the Euphrates from the Perſian Gulf, are of ſuch ſmall bulk as to bear the expence of a long land-carriage, this trade ſoon became ſo conſiderable that the opulence and power of Palmyra increaſed rapidly. Its government was of the form which is beſt ſuited to the genius of a commercial city, republican; and from the peculiar advantages of its ſituation, as well as the ſpirit of its inhabitants, it long maintained its independence, though ſurrounded by powerful and ambitious neighbours. Under the Syrian monarchs deſcended from Seleucus it attained to its higheſt degree of ſplendour and wealth, one great ſource of which ſeems to have been the ſupplying their ſubjects with Indian commodities. When Syria ſubmitted to the irreſiſtible arms of Rome, Palmyra continued upwards of two centuries a free ſtate, and its friendſhip was courted with emulation and ſolicitude by the Romans, and their rivals for empire, the Parthians. That it traded with both, particularly that from it the capital, as well as other parts

[c] 1 Kings. ix. 18. 2 Chron. viii. 4.

of

SECT. II.

of the empire received the productions of India, we learn from Appian, an author of good credit[d]. But in tracing the progress of the commerce of the ancients with the East, I should not have ventured, upon his single testimony, to mention this among the channels of note in which it was carried on, if a singular discovery, for which we are indebted to the liberal curiosity and enterprizing spirit of our own countrymen, did not confirm and illustrate what he relates. Towards the close of the last century, some gentlemen of the English factory at Aleppo, incited by what they heard in the East concerning the wonderful ruins of Palmyra, ventured, notwithstanding the fatigue and danger of a journey through the desart, to visit them. To their astonishment they beheld a fertile spot of some miles in extent, arising like an island out of a vast plain of sand, covered with the remains of temples, porticoes, aqueducts, and other public works, which in magnificence and splendour, and some of them in elegance, were not unworthy of Athens or of Rome in their most prosperous state. Allured by their description of them, about sixty years thereafter, a party of more enlightened travellers, having reviewed the ruins of Palmyra with greater attention and more scientific skill, declared that what they beheld there exceeded the most exalted ideas which they had formed concerning it[e].

From both these accounts, as well as from recollecting the extraordinary degree of power to which Palmyra had attained,

[d] Appian. de Bello Civil. lib. v. p. 1076. edit. Tollii.

[e] Wood's Ruins of Palmyra, p. 37.

when

when Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, and a considerable part of Asia Minor were conquered by its arms; when Odenatus, its chief magistrate, was decorated with the Imperial purple, and Zenobia contended for the dominion of the East with Rome under one of its most warlike Emperors, it is evident, that a state which could derive little importance from its original territory, must have owed its aggrandizement to the opulence acquired by extensive commerce. Of this the Indian trade was undoubtedly the most considerable, and most lucrative branch. But it is a cruel mortification, in searching for what is instructive in the history of past times, to find that the exploits of conquerors who have desolated the earth, and the freaks of tyrants who have rendered nations unhappy, are recorded with minute and often disgusting accuracy, while the discovery of useful arts, and the progress of the most beneficial branches of commerce, are passed over in silence, and suffered to sink into oblivion.

After the conquest of Palmyra by Aurelian, trade never revived there. At present a few miserable huts of beggarly Arabs are scattered in the courts of its stately temples, or deform its elegant porticoes; and exhibit an humiliating contrast to its ancient magnificence.

But while the merchants of Egypt and Syria exerted their activity in order to supply the increasing demands of Rome for Indian commodities, and vied with each other in their efforts, the eagerness of gain (as Pliny observes) brought India itself nearer to the rest of the world. In the course of their voyages to that country, the Greek and Egyptian pilots could not fail

SECT. II.

to obferve the regular fhifting of the periodical winds or monfoons, and how fteadily they continued to blow during one part of the year from the Eaft, and during the other from the Weft. Encouraged by attending to this circumftance, Hippalus, the commander of a fhip engaged in the Indian trade, ventured, about four-fcore years after Egypt was annexed to the Roman empire, to relinquifh the flow and circuitous courfe which I have defcribed, and ftretching boldly from the mouth of the Arabian Gulf acrofs the ocean, was carried by the weftern monfoon to Mufiris, a harbour in that part of India, now known by the name of the Malabar coaft.

THIS route to India was held to be a difcovery of fuch importance, that in order to perpetuate the memory of the inventor, the name of Hippalus was given to the wind which enabled him to perform the voyage[f]. As this was one of the greateft efforts of navigation in the ancient world, and opened the beft communication by fea between the Eaft and Weft that was known for fourteen hundred years, it merits a particular defcription. Fortunately Pliny has enabled us to give it with a degree of accuracy, which can feldom be attained in tracing the naval or commercial operations of the ancients. From Alexandria (he obferves) to Juliopolis is two miles; there the cargo deftined for India is embarked on the Nile, and is carried to Coptos, which is diftant three hundred and three miles, and the voyage is ufually accomplifhed in twelve days. From Coptos goods are conveyed to Berenice on the Arabian Gulf, halting

[f] Perip. Mar. Erythr. p. 32.

at different ſtations regulated according to the conveniency of watering. The diſtance between theſe cities is two hundred and fifty-eight miles. On account of the heat, the caravan travels only during the night, and the journey is finiſhed on the twelfth day. From Berenice, ſhips take their departure about midſummer, and in thirty days reach Ocelis (Gella) at the mouth of the Arabian Gulf, or Cane (Cape Fartaque) on the coaſt of Arabia Felix. Thence they ſail in forty days to Muſiris, the firſt emporium in India. They begin their voyage homewards early in the Egyptian month Thibi, which anſwers to our December; they ſail with a north-eaſt wind, and when they enter the Arabian Gulf meet with a ſouth or ſouth-weſt wind, and thus complete the voyage in leſs than a year [g].

THE account which Pliny gives of Muſiris, and of Barace, another harbour not far diſtant, which was likewiſe frequented by the ſhips from Berenice, as being both ſo incommodious for trade on account of the ſhallowneſs of the ports, that it became neceſſary to diſcharge and take in the cargoes in ſmall boats, does not enable us to fix their poſition with perfect accuracy. This deſcription applies to many ports on the Malabar coaſt, but from two circumſtances mentioned by him; one, that they are not far diſtant from Cottonara, the country which produces pepper in great abundance; and the other, that in ſailing towards them the courſe lay near Nitrias, the ſtation of the pirates; I adopt the opinion of Major Rennell, that they were ſituated ſomewhere between Goa and Tellicherry, and that probably

[g] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 23. See NOTE XIX.

SECT. II. the modern Meerzaw or Merjee is the Muſiris of the ancients, and Barcelore their Barace[h].

As in theſe two ports was the principal ſtaple of the trade between Egypt and India, when in its moſt flouriſhing ſtate, this ſeems to be the proper place for inquiring into the nature of the commerce which the ancients, particularly the Romans, carried on with that country, and for enumerating the commodities moſt in requeſt, which they imported from it. But as the operations of commerce, and the mode of regulating it, were little attended to in thoſe ſtates of antiquity, of whoſe tranſactions we have any accurate knowledge; their hiſtorians hardly enter into any detail concerning a ſubject of ſuch ſubordinate importance in their political ſyſtem, and it is moſtly from brief hints, detached facts, and incidental obſervations, that we can gather information concerning it[i].

In every age, it has been a commerce of luxury, rather than of neceſſity, which has been carried on between Europe and India. Its elegant manufactures, ſpices, and precious ſtones, are neither objects of deſire to nations of ſimple manners, nor are ſuch nations poſſeſſed of wealth ſufficient to purchaſe them. But at the time the Romans became maſters of the Indian trade, they were not only (as I have already obſerved) in that ſtage of ſociety when men are eager to obtain every thing that can render the enjoyment of life more exquiſite, or add to its ſplendour, but they had acquired all the fantaſtic taſtes formed

[h] Introd. p. xxxvii. [i] See NOTE XX.

by

by the caprice and extravagance of wealth. They were of consequence highly delighted with those new objects of gratification with which India supplied them in such abundance. The productions of that country, natural as well as artificial, seem to have been much the same in that age as in the present. But the taste of the Romans in luxury differed in many respects from that of modern times, and of course their demands from India differed considerably from ours.

In order to convey an idea of their demands as complete as possible, I shall in the first place make some observations on the three great articles of general importation from India. 1. Spices and aromatics. 2. Precious stones and pearls. 3. Silk. And then I shall give some account (as far as I can venture to do it from authentic information) of the assortment of cargoes, both outward and homeward bound, for the vessels fitted out at Berenice for different ports of India.

I. Spices and aromatics. From the mode of religious worship in the heathen world; from the incredible number of their deities, and of the temples consecrated to them; the consumption of frankincense and other aromatics which were used in every sacred function, must have been very great. But the vanity of men occasioned a greater consumption of these fragrant substances than their piety. It was the custom of the Romans to burn the bodies of their dead, and they deemed it a display of magnificence, to cover, not only the body but the funeral pile on which it was laid, with the most costly spices. At the funeral of Sylla, two hundred and ten burthens

 of

SECT. II.

of ſpices were ſtrewed upon the pile. Nero is reported to have burnt a quantity of cinnamon and caſſia at the funeral of Pappœa, greater than the countries from which it was imported produced in one year. We conſume in heaps theſe precious ſubſtances with the carcaſes of the dead (ſays Pliny): We offer them to the Gods only in grains[k]. It was not from India, I am aware, but from Arabia, that aromatics were firſt imported into Europe; and ſome of them, particularly frankincenſe, were productions of that country. But the Arabians were accuſtomed, together with ſpices of native growth, to furniſh foreign merchants with others of higher value, which they brought from India, and the regions beyond it. The commercial intercourſe of the Arabians with the Eaſtern parts of Aſia, was not only early (as has been already obſerved) but conſiderable. By means of their trading caravans, they conveyed into their own country all the valuable productions of the Eaſt, among which, ſpices held a chief place. In every ancient account of Indian commodities, ſpices and aromatics of various kinds form a principal article[l]. Some authors aſſert that the greater part of thoſe purchaſed in Arabia were not the growth of that country, but brought from India[m]. That this aſſertion was well-founded, appears from what has been obſerved in modern times. The frankincenſe of Arabia, though reckoned the peculiar and moſt precious production of the country, is much inferior in quality to that imported into it from the Eaſt; and it is chiefly with the latter, that the Arabians at preſent ſupply the extenſive demands of various

[k] Nat. Hiſt. lib. xii. c. 18.
[l] Peripl. Mar. Eryth. p. 22. 28. Strab. lib. ii. p. 156. A. lib. xv. p. 1018. A.
[m] Strab. lib. xvii. p. 1129. C.

provinces

provinces of Afia for this commodity[n]. It is upon good authority, then, that I have mentioned the inportation of fpices as one of the moft confiderable branches of ancient commerce with India.

SECT. II.

II. PRECIOUS ftones, together with which pearls may be claffed, feem to be the article next in value imported by the Romans from the Eaft. As thefe have no pretenfion to be of any real ufe, their value arifes entirely from their beauty and their rarity, and even when eftimated moft moderately is always high. But among nations far advanced in luxury, when they are deemed not only ornaments but marks of diftinction, the vain and the opulent vie fo eagerly with one another for the poffeffion of them, that they rife in price to an exorbitant and almoft incredible height. Diamonds, though the art of cutting them was imperfectly known to the ancients, held an high place in eftimation among them as well as among us. The comparative value of other precious ftones varied according to the diverfity of taftes and the caprice of fafhion. The immenfe number of them mentioned by Pliny, and the laborious care with which he defcribes and arranges them[o], will aftonifh, I fhould fuppofe, the moft fkilful lapidary or jeweller of modern times, and fhews the high requeft in which they were held by the Romans.

But among all the articles of luxury, the Romans feem to have given the preference to pearls[p]. Perfons of every rank

[n] Niebuhr. Defcript. de l'Arabie, tom. i. p. 126.

[o] Nat. Hift. lib. xxxvii.

[p] See NOTE XXI.

purchafed

SECT. II.

purchased them with eagerness; they were worn on every part of dress; and there is such a difference, both in size and in value, among pearls, that while such as were large and of superior lustre adorned the wealthy and the great, smaller ones, and of inferior quality, gratified the vanity of persons in more humble stations of life. Julius Cæsar presented Servilia, the mother of Brutus, with a pearl, for which he paid forty-eight thousand four hundred and fifty-seven pounds. The famous pearl ear-rings of Cleopatra were in value one hundred and sixty-one thousand four hundred and fifty-eight pounds [q]. Precious stones, it is true, as well as pearls, were found not only in India, but in many different countries, and all were ransacked in order to gratify the pride of Rome. India, however, furnished the chief part, and its productions were allowed to be most abundant, diversified, and valuable.

III. ANOTHER production of India in great demand at Rome, was silk; and when we recollect the variety of elegant fabrics into which it may be formed, and how much these have added to the splendour of dress and furniture, we cannot wonder at its being held in such estimation by a luxurious people. The price it bore was exorbitant; but it was deemed a dress too expensive and too delicate for men [r], and was appropriated wholly to women of eminent rank and opulence. This, however, did not render the demand for it less eager, especially after the example of the dissolute Elagabalus introduced the use of it among the other sex, and accustomed men

[q] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ix. c. 35. See NOTE XXII.
[r] Tacit. Annal. lib. ii. c. 33.

to the difgrace (as the feverity of ancient ideas accounted it) of wearing this effeminate garb. Two circumftances concerning the traffic of filk among the Romans merit obfervation. Contrary to what ufually takes place in the operations of trade, the more general ufe of that commodity feems not to have increafed the quantity imported, in fuch proportion as to anfwer the growing demand for it, and the price of filk was not reduced during the courfe of two hundred and fifty years from the time of its being firft known in Rome. In the reign of Aurelian, it ftill continued to be valued at its weight in gold. This, it is probable, was owing to the mode in which that commodity was procured by the merchants of Alexandria. They had no direct intercourfe with China, the only country in which the filk-worm was then reared, and its labour rendered an article of commerce. All the filk which they purchafed in the different ports of India which they frequented, was brought thither in fhips of the country; and either from fome defect of fkill in managing the filk-worm, the produce of its ingenious induftry among the Chinefe was fcanty, or the intermediate dealers found greater advantage in furnifhing the market of Alexandria with a fmall quantity at an high price, than to lower its value by increafing the quantity. The other circumftance which I had in view, is more extraordinary, and affords a ftriking proof of the imperfect communication of the ancients with remote nations, and of the flender knowledge which they had of their natural productions or arts. Much as the manufactures of filk were admired, and often as filk is mentioned by the Greek and Roman authors, they had not for feveral centuries after the ufe of it became common, any cer-

tain

SECT. II. tain knowledge either of the countries to which they were indebted for this favourite article of elegance, or of the manner in which it was produced. By ſome, ſilk was ſuppoſed to be a fine down adhering to the leaves of certain trees or flowers; others imagined it to be a delicate ſpecies of wool or cotton; and even thoſe who had learned that it was the work of an inſect, ſhew, by their deſcriptions, that they had no diſtinct idea of the manner in which it was formed *. It was in conſequence of an event that happened in the ſixth century of the Chriſtian æra, of which I ſhall hereafter take notice, that the real nature of ſilk became known in Europe.

The other commodities uſually imported from India, will be mentioned in the account, which I now proceed to give, of the cargoes ſent out and brought home in the ſhips employed in that trade. For this we are indebted to the circumnavigation of the Erythræan ſea, aſcribed to Arrian, a curious though ſhort treatiſe, leſs known than it deſerves to be, and which enters into ſome details concerning commerce, to which there is nothing ſimilar in any ancient writer. The firſt place in India, in which the ſhips from Egypt, while they followed the ancient courſe of navigation, were accuſtomed to trade, was Patala in the river Indus. They imported into it woollen cloth of a ſlight fabric, linen in chequer work, ſome precious ſtones, and ſome aromatics unknown in India, coral, ſtorax, glaſs veſſels of different kinds, ſome wrought ſilver, money, and wine. In return for theſe, they received ſpices

* See NOTE XXIII.

of various kinds, fapphires, and other gems, filk ftuffs, filk thread, cotton cloths [t], and black pepper. But a far more confiderable emporium on the fame coaft was Barygaza, and on that account the author, whom I follow here, defcribes its fituation, and the mode of approaching it, with great minutenefs and accuracy. Its fituation correfponds entirely with that of Baroach, on the great river Nerbuddah, down the ftream of which, or by land-carriage, from the great city of Tagara acrofs high mountains [u], all the productions of the interior country were conveyed to it. The articles of importation and exportation in this great mart were extenfive and various. Befides thefe already mentioned, our author enumerates among the former, Italian, Greek, and Arabian wines, brafs, tin, lead, girdles or fafhes of curious texture, melilot, white glafs, red arfenic, black lead, gold and filver coin. Among the exports he mentions the onyx, and other gems, ivory, myrrh, various fabrics of cotton, both plain and ornamented with flowers, and long pepper [x]. At Mufiris, the next emporium of note on that coaft, the articles imported were much the fame as at Barygaza; but as it lay nearer to the eaftern parts of India, and feems to have had much communication with them, the commodities exported from it were more numerous and more valuable. He fpecifies particularly pearls in great abundance and of extraordinary beauty, a variety of filk ftuffs, rich perfumes, tortoife-fhell, different kinds of tranfparent gems, efpecially diamonds, and pepper in large quantities, and of the beft quality [y].

[t] See NOTE XXIV.
[u] See NOTE XXV.
[x] Peripl. Mar. Erythr. p. 28.
[y] Ibid. 31, 32.

SECT. II.

The juſtneſs of the account given by this author of the articles imported from India, is confirmed by a Roman law, in which the Indian commodities ſubject to the payment of duties are enumerated [a]. By comparing theſe two accounts, we may form an idea, tolerably exact, of the nature and extent of the trade with India in ancient times.

As the ſtate of ſociety and manners among the natives of India, in the earlieſt period in which they are known, nearly reſembled what we obſerve among their deſcendants in the preſent age; their wants and demands were, of courſe, much the ſame. The ingenuity of their own artiſts were ſo able to ſupply theſe, that they ſtood little in need of foreign manufactures or productions, except ſome of the uſeful metals, which their own country did not furniſh in ſufficient quantity; and then, as now, it was moſtly with gold and ſilver that the luxuries of the Eaſt were purchaſed. In two particulars, however, our importations from India differ greatly from thoſe of the ancients. The dreſs, both of the Greeks and Romans, was almoſt entirely woollen, which, by their frequent uſe of the warm bath, was rendered abundantly comfortable. Their conſumption of linen and cotton cloths was much inferior to that of modern times, when theſe are worn by perſons in every rank of life. Accordingly, a great branch of modern importation from that part of India with which the ancients were acquainted, is in *piece-goods*; comprehending, under that mercantile term, the immenſe variety of fabrics, which Indian ingenuity has formed of cotton. But, as far as I have obſerved, we have no autho-

[a] Digeſt, lib. xxxix. tit. iv. §. 16. De publicanis et veſtigalibus.

rity

rity that will juftify us in ftating the ancient importation of these to be in any degree confiderable. SECT. II.

In modern times, though it continues ftill to be chiefly a commerce of luxury that is carried on with India, yet, together with the articles that minifter to it, we import, to a confiderable extent, various commodities, which are to be confidered merely as the materials of our domeftic manufactures. Such are the cotton-wool of Indoftan, the filk of China, and the falt-petre of Bengal. But in the accounts of ancient importations from India, raw filk and filk-thread excepted, I find nothing mentioned that could ferve as the materials of any home-manufacture. The navigation of the ancients never having extended to China, the quantity of unwrought filk with which they were fupplied, by means of the Indian traders, appears to have been fo fcanty, that the manufacture of it could not make an addition of any moment to their domeftic induftry.

After this fuccinct account of the commerce carried on by the ancients in India, I proceed to inquire what knowledge they had of the countries beyond the ports of Mufiris and Barace, the utmoft boundary towards the Eaft to which I have hitherto traced their progrefs. The Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, whofe accuracy of defcription juftifies the confidence with which I have followed him for fome time, feems to have been little acquainted with that part of the coaft which ftretches from Barace towards the fouth. He mentions, indeed, curforily, two or three different

SECT. II. ports, but gives no intimation that any of them were ftaples of the commerce with Egypt. He haftens to Comar or Cape Comorin, the fouthernmoft point of the Indian peninfula, and his defcription of it is fo accurate, and fo conformable to its real ftate, as fhews his information concerning it to have been perfectly authentic [a]. Near to this he places the pearl-fifhery of Colchos, the modern Kilkare, undoubtedly the fame with that now carried on by the Dutch in the ftrait which feparates the ifland of Ceylon from the continent. As adjacent to this he mentions three different ports, which appear to have been fituated on the eaft fide of the peninfula now known by the name of the Coromandel coaft. He defcribes thefe as *emporia*, or ftations of trade [b]; but from an attentive confideration of fome circumftances in his account of them, I think it probable that the fhips from Berenice did not fail to any of thefe ports, though they were fupplied, as he informs us, with the commodities brought from Egypt, as well as with the productions of the oppofite coaft of the peninfula; but thefe feem to have been imported in *country fhips* [c]. It was likewife in veffels of their own, varying in form and burden, and diftinguifhed by different names, fome of which he mentions, that they traded with the Golden Cherfonefus, or kingdom of Malacca, and the countries near the Ganges. Not far from the mouth of that river he places an ifland, which he defcribes as fituated under the rifing fun, and as the laft region in the Eaft that was inhabited [d]. Of all thefe parts of India, the

[a] Peripl. p. 33. D'Anville Ant. de l' Inde, 118, &c.
[b] Peripl. p. 34. [c] τοπικα πλοῖα. [d] Peripl. p. 36.

the Author of the Circumnavigation appears to have had very ſlender knowledge, as is manifeſt, not only from what he mentions concerning this imaginary iſland, and from his not attempting to deſcribe them, but from his relating, with the credulity and love of the marvellous, which always accompany and characteriſe ignorance, that theſe remote regions were peopled with cannibals, and men of uncouth and monſtrous forms [c].

I HAVE been induced to beſtow this attention, in tracing the courſe delineated in the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, becauſe the Author of it is the firſt ancient writer to whom we are indebted for any knowledge of the eaſtern coaſt of the great peninſula of India, or of the countries which lie beyond it. To Strabo, who compoſed his great work on geography in the reign of Auguſtus, India, particularly the moſt eaſtern parts of it, was little known. He begins his deſcription of it with requeſting the indulgence of his readers, on account of the ſcanty information he could obtain with reſpect to a country ſo remote, which Europeans had ſeldom viſited, and many of them tranſiently only, in the functions of military ſervice. He obſerves, that even commerce had contributed little towards an accurate inveſtigation of the country, as few of the merchants from Egypt and the Arabian Gulf had ever ſailed as far as the Ganges; and from men ſo illiterate, intelligence that merited a full degree of confidence could hardly be expected. His deſcriptions of India, particularly its

[c] Peripl. p. 35.

SECT. II. interior provinces, are borrowed almoſt entirely from the Memoirs of Alexander's Officers, with ſome ſlender additions from more recent accounts, and theſe ſo few in number, and ſometimes ſo inaccurate, as to furniſh a ſtriking proof of the ſmall progreſs which the ancients had made, from the time of Alexander, in exploring that country. When an author, poſſeſſed of ſuch diſcernment and induſtry as Strabo, who viſited in perſon ſeveral diſtant regions that he might be able to deſcribe them with greater accuracy, relates, that the Ganges enters the ocean by one mouth[f], we are warranted in concluding, that in his time there was either no direct navigation carried on to that great river, by the traders from the Arabian Gulf, or that this voyage was undertaken ſo ſeldom, that ſcience had not then derived much information from it.

The next author, in order of time, from whom we receive any account of India, is the elder Pliny, who flouriſhed about fifty years later than Strabo. As in the ſhort deſcription of India given in his Natural Hiſtory, he follows the ſame guides with Strabo, and ſeems to have had no knowledge of the interior country, but what he derived from the officers who ſerved under Alexander and his immediate ſucceſſors, it is unneceſſary to examine his deſcription minutely. He has added, however, two valuable articles, for which he was indebted to more recent diſcoveries. The one is the account of the new courſe of navigation from the Arabian Gulf to the coaſt of Malabar, the nature and importance of which I have

[f] Strabo, lib. xv. 1011. C.

already

already explained. The other is a defcription of the ifland of Taprobana, which I fhall confider particularly, after enquiring into what Ptolemy has contributed towards our knowledge of the ancient ftate of India. SECT. II.

THOUGH Ptolemy, who publifhed his works about fourfcore years after Pliny, feems to have been more diftinguifhed for his perfevering induftry, and talent for arrangement, than for an inventive genius; geography has been more indebted to him for its improvement, than to any other philofopher. Fortunately for that fcience, in forming his general fyftem of geography, he adopted the ideas, and imitated the practice of Hipparchus, who lived near four hundred years before his time. That great philofopher was the firft who attempted to make a catalogue of the ftars. In order to afcertain their pofition in the heavens with accuracy, he meafured their diftance from certain circles of the fphere, computing it by degrees, either from eaft to weft, or from north to fouth. The former was denominated the longitude of the ftar, the latter its latitude. This mode he found to be of fuch utility in his aftronomical refearches, that he applied it with no lefs happy effect to geography; and it is a circumftance worthy of notice, that it was by obferving and defcribing the heavens, men were firft taught to meafure and delineate the earth with exactnefs. This method of fixing the pofition of places, invented by Hipparchus, though known to the geographers between his time and that of Ptolemy, and mentioned both by Strabo [g], and by Pliny [h], was not employed by any of them.

[g] Lib. ii.

[h] Nat. Hift. lib. ii. c. 12. 26. 70.

SECT. II. them. Of this neglect the most probable account seems to be, that, as none of them were astronomers, they did not fully comprehend all the advantages geography might derive from this invention [i]. These Ptolemy, who had devoted a long life to the improvement of astronomy, theoretical as well as practical, perfectly discerned, and, as in both these Hipparchus was his guide, he, in his famous treatise on geography, described the different parts of the earth according to their longitude and latitude. Geography was thus established upon its proper principles, and intimately connected with astronomical observation and mathematical science. This work of Ptolemy soon rose high in estimation among the ancients [k]. During the middle ages, both in Arabia and in Europe, the decisions of Ptolemy, in every thing relative to geography, were submitted to with an assent as implicit, as was yielded to those of Aristotle in all other departments of science. On the revival of a more liberal spirit of inquiry in the sixteenth century, the merit of Ptolemy's improvements in geography was examined and recognized; that scientific language which he first rendered general, continues to be used, and the position of places is still ascertained in the same distinct and compendious manner, by specifying their longitude and latitude.

NOT satisfied with adopting the general principles of Hipparchus, Ptolemy emulated him in the application of them; and, as that philosopher had arranged all the constellations, he ventured upon what was no less arduous, to survey all the regions

[i] See NOTE XXVI. [k] See NOTE XXVII.

 of

of the earth, which were then known, and with minute and bold decifion he fixed the longitude and latitude of the moft remarkable places in each of them. All his determinations, however, are not to be confidered as the refult of actual obfervation, nor did Ptolemy publifh them as fuch. Aftronomical fcience was confined, at that time, to a few countries. A confiderable part of the globe was little vifited, and imperfectly defcribed. The pofition of a fmall number of places only had been fixed with any degree of accuracy. Ptolemy was therefore obliged to confult the itineraries and furveys of the Roman Empire, which the political wifdom of that great ftate had completed with immenfe labour and expence[l]. Beyond the precincts of the empire, he had nothing on which he could rely, but the journals and reports of travellers. Upon thefe all his conclufions were founded; and as he refided in Alexandria at a time when the trade from that city to India was carried on to its utmoft extent, this fituation might have been expected to afford him the means of procuring ample information concerning it. But either from the imperfect manner in which that country was explored in his time, or from his placing too much confidence in the reports of perfons who had vifited it with little attention or difcernment[m], his general delineation of the form of the Indian continent is the moft erroneous that has been tranfmitted to us from antiquity. By an aftonifhing miftake, he has made the peninfula of India ftretch from the Sinus Barygazenus, or Gulf of Cambay, from weft to eaft, inftead of extending, according to

[l] See NOTE XXVIII.

[m] Geogr. lib. i. c. 17.

SECT. II.

its real direction, from north to fouth[n]. This error will appear the more unaccountable, when we recollect that Megafthenes had publifhed a meafurement of the Indian peninfula, which approaches near to its true dimenfions; and that this had been adopted, with fome variations, by Eratofthenes, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny, who wrote prior to the age of Ptolemy[o].

ALTHOUGH Ptolemy was led to form fuch an erroneous opinion concerning the general dimenfions of the Indian continent, his information with refpect to the country in detail, and the fituation of particular places, was more accurate; and he is the firft author poffeffed of fuch knowledge as enabled him to trace the fea-coaft, to mention the moft noted places fituated upon it, and to fpecify the longitude and latitude of each from Cape Comorin eaftward, to the utmoft boundary of ancient navigation. With regard to fome diftricts, particularly along the eaft fide of the peninfula as far as the mouth of the Ganges, the accounts which he had received feem to have been fo far exact, as to correfpond more nearly perhaps with the actual ftate of the country, than the defcriptions which he gives of any other part of India. M. D'Anville, with his ufual induftry and difcernment, has confidered the principal ftations as they are fixed by him, and finds that they correfpond to Kilkare, Negapatam, the mouth of the river Cauveri,

[n] See NOTE XXIX.

[o] Strabo, lib. xv. 1010. B. Arrian, Hift. Indic, c. 3, 4. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. 148. Plin. Nat. Hift. lib. vi. c. 21. See NOTE XXX.

Mafulipatam,

Masulipatam, Point Gordeware, &c. It is foreign to the object of this Disquisition, to enter into such a minute detail; but in several instances we may observe, that not only the conformity of position, but the similarity of ancient and modern names, is very striking. The great river Cauveri is by Ptolemy named Chaberis; Arcot, in the interior country, is Arcati Regia; and probably the whole coast has received its present name of Coromandel from *Sor Mandulam*, or the kingdom of Soræ, which is situated upon it [p].

In the course of one hundred and thirty-six years, which elapsed from the death of Strabo to that of Ptolemy, the commercial intercourse with India was greatly extended; the latter geographer had acquired such an accession of new information concerning the Ganges, that he mentions the names of six different mouths of that river, and describes their positions. His delineation, however, of that part of India which lies beyond the Ganges, is not less erroneous in its general form, than that which he gave of the peninsula, and bears as little resemblance to the actual position of those countries. He ventures, nevertheless, upon a survey of them, similar to that which he had made of the other great division of India, which I have already examined. He mentions the places of note along the coast, some of which he distinguishes as *Emporia;* but whether that name was given to them on account of their being staples of trade to the natives, in their traffic carried on from one district of India to another, or whether they were

[p] Ptolem. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 1. D'Anville, Antiq. de l'Inde, 127, &c.

SECT. II.

ports, to which veſſels from the Arabian Gulf reſorted directly, is not ſpecified. The latter I ſhould think to be the idea which Ptolemy means to convey; but theſe regions of India were ſo remote, and, from the timid and ſlow courſe of ancient navigation, were probably ſo little frequented, that his information concerning them is extremely defective, and his deſcriptions more obſcure, more inaccurate, and leſs conformable to the real ſtate of the country, than in any part of his geography. That peninſula to which he gives the name of the Golden Cherſoneſus, he delineates as if it ſtretched directly from north to ſouth, and fixes the latitude of Sabana Emporium, its ſouthern extremity, three degrees beyond the line. To the eaſt of this peninſula he places, what he calls the Great Bay, and in the moſt remote part of it the ſtation of Catigara, the utmoſt boundary of navigation in ancient times, to which he aſſigns no leſs than eight degrees and a half of ſouthern latitude. Beyond this, he declares the earth to be altogether unknown, and aſſerts that the land turns thence to the weſtward, and ſtretches in that direction until it joins the promontory of Praſſum in Ethiopia, which, according to his idea, terminated the continent of Africa to the ſouth [q]. In conſequence of this error, no leſs unaccountable than enormous, he muſt have believed the Erythræan Sea, in its whole extent from the coaſt of Africa to that of Cambodia, to be a vaſt baſon, without any communication with the ocean [r].

[q] Ptolem. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3. 5. D'Anville, Ant. de l'Inde, 187.

[r] See NOTE XXXI.

OUT

SECT. II.

OUT of the confusion of those wild ideas, in which the accounts of ignorant or fabulous travellers have involved the geography of Ptolemy, M. D'Anville has attempted to bring order; and, with much ingenuity, he has formed opinions with respect to some capital positions, which have the appearance of being well founded. The peninsula of Malacca is, according to him, the Golden Chersonesus of Ptolemy; but instead of the direction which he has given it, we know that it bends some degrees towards the east, and that Cape de Romania, its southern extremity, is more than a degree to the north of the line. The Gulf of Siam he considers as the Great Bay of Ptolemy, but the position on the east side of that Bay, corresponding to Catigara, is actually as many degrees to the north of the Equator, as he supposed it to be south of it. Beyond this he mentions an inland city, to which he gives the name of Thinæ or Sinæ Metropolis. The longitude which he assigns to it, is one hundred and eighty degrees from his first meridian in the Fortunate Island, and is the utmost point towards the East to which the ancients had advanced by sea. Its latitude he calculates to be three degrees south of the line. If, with M. D'Anville, we conclude the situation of Sin-hoa, in the western part of the kingdom of Cochin-China, to be the same with Sinæ Metropolis, Ptolemy has erred in fixing its position no less than fifty degrees of longitude, and twenty degrees of latitude [a].

[a] Ptolem. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3. D'Anville, Limites du Monde conudes Anciens au-dela du Gange. Mem. de Literat. xxxii. 604, &c. Ant. de l'Inde, Supplem. i. 161, &c. See NOTE XXXII.

SECT. II.

THESE errors of Ptolemy concerning the remote parts of Afia, have been rendered more confpicuous by a miftaken opinion of modern times ingrafted upon them. Sinæ, the moft diftant ftation mentioned in his geography, has fuch a near refemblance in found to China, the name by which the greateft and moft civilized empire in the Eaft is known to Europeans, that upon their firft acquaintance with it, they haftily concluded them to be the fame; and of confequence it was fuppofed that China was known to the ancients, though no point feems to be more afcertained, than that they never advanced by fea beyond that boundary which I have allotted to their navigation.

HAVING thus traced the difcoveries of India which the ancients made by fea, I fhall next examine what additional knowledge of that country they acquired from their progrefs by land. It appears (as I have formerly related) that there was a trade carried on early with India through the provinces that ftretch along its northern frontier. Its various productions and manufactures were tranfported by land-carriage into the interior parts of the Perfian dominions, or were conveyed, by means of the navigable rivers which flow through the Upper Afia, to the Cafpian Sea and from that to the Euxine. While the fucceffors of Seleucus retained the dominion of the Eaft, this continued to be the mode of fupplying their fubjects with the commodities of India. When the Romans had extended their conquefts fo far that the Euphrates was the Eaftern limit of their empire, they found this trade ftill eftablifhed, and as it opened to them a new communication with the Eaft, by means of which they received an additional fupply of luxuries, for which they had

had acquired the higheſt reliſh, it became an object of their policy to protect and encourage it. As the progreſs of the caravans or companies of merchants, which travelled towards the countries whence they received the moſt valuable manufactures, particularly thoſe of ſilk, was often interrupted, and rendered dangerous by the Parthians, who had acquired poſſeſſion of all the provinces which extend from the Caſpian Sea to that part of Scythia or Tartary which borders on China, the Romans endeavoured to render this intercourſe more ſecure by a negociation with one of the monarchs of that great empire. Of this ſingular tranſaction there is, indeed, no veſtige in the Greek or Roman writers; our knowledge of it is derived entirely from the Chineſe hiſtorians, by whom we are informed that An-toun, (the Emperor Marcus Antoninus,) the king of the people of the Weſtern Ocean, ſent an embaſſy with this view to Oun-ti, who reigned over China in the hundred and ſixty-ſixth year of the Chriſtian æra[t]. What was the ſucceſs of this attempt is not known, nor can we ſay whether it facilitated ſuch an intercourſe between theſe two remote nations as contributed towards the ſupply of their mutual wants. The deſign certainly was not unworthy of the enlightened emperor of Rome to whom it is aſcribed.

It is evident, however, that in proſecuting this trade with China, a conſiderable part of the extenſive countries to the eaſt of the Caſpian Sea muſt have been traverſed; and though

[t] Memoire ſur les Liaiſons et le Commerce du Romains, avec les Tartares et les Chinois, par M. de Guignes. Mem. de Literat. xxxii. 355, &c.

SECT. II. the chief inducement to undertake thofe diftant journies was gain, yet, in the courfe of ages, there muft have mingled among the adventurers, perfons of curiofity and abilities, who could turn their attention from commercial objects to thofe of more general concern. From them fuch information was procured, and fubjected to fcientific difcuffion, as enabled Ptolemy to give a defcription of thofe inland and remote regions of Afia [u], fully as accurate as that of feveral countries, of which, from their vicinity, he may have been fuppofed to have received more diftinct accounts. The fartheft point towards the Eaft, to which his knowledge of this part of Afia extended, is Sera Metropolis, which, from various circumftances, appears to have been in the fame fituation with Kant-cheou, a city of fome note in Chen-fi, the moft wefterly province of the Chinefe empire. This he places in the longitude of one hundred and feventy-feven degrees fifteen minutes, near three degrees to the weft of Sinæ Metropolis, which he had defcribed as the utmoft limit of Afia difcovered by fea. Nor was Ptolemy's knowledge of this diftrict of Afia confined only to that part of it through which the caravans may be fuppofed to have proceeded directly in their route eaftward; he had received likewife fome general information concerning various nations towards the north, which, according to the pofition that he gives them, occupied parts of the great plain of Tartary, extending confiderably beyond Laffa, the capital of Thibet, and the refidence of the Dalai Lama.

[u] Lib. vi. c. 11—18.

THE

The latitudes of ſeveral places in this part of Aſia are fixed by Ptolemy with ſuch uncommon preciſion, that we can hardly doubt of their having been aſcertained by actual obſervation. Out of many inſtances of this, I ſhall ſelect three of places ſituated in very different parts of the country under review. The latitude of Nagara, on the river Cophenes, (the modern Attock,) is, according to Ptolemy, thirty-two degrees and thirty minutes, which co-incides preciſely with the obſervation of an Eaſtern geographer quoted by M. D'Anville [x]. The latitude of Maracanda, or Samarcand, as fixed by him, is thirty-nine degrees fifteen minutes. According to the Aſtronomical Tables of Ulug Beg, the grandſon of Timur, whoſe royal reſidence was in that city, it is thirty-nine degrees thirty-ſeven minutes [y]. The latitude of Sera Metropolis, in Ptolemy, is thirty-eight degrees fifteen minutes; that of Kant-cheou, as determined by the Jeſuit Miſſionaries, is thirty-nine degrees. I have enumerated theſe ſtriking examples of the co-incidence of his calculations with thoſe eſtabliſhed by modern obſervations, for two reaſons: One, becauſe they clearly prove that theſe remote parts of Aſia had been examined with ſome conſiderable degree of attention; the other, becauſe I feel great ſatisfaction, after having been obliged to mention ſeveral errors and defects in Ptolemy's geography, in rendering juſtice to a philoſopher, who has contributed ſo much towards the improvement of that ſcience. The facts which I have produced afford the ſtrongeſt evidence of the extent of his information, as well as the

[x] Eclairciſſemens, &c. Engliſh Tranſlation, p. 10.

[y] Tab. Geogr. ap. Hudſon. Geogr. Minores, iii. 145.

SECT. II. juſtneſs of his concluſions concerning countries with which, from their remote ſituation, we might have ſuppoſed him to be leaſt acquainted.

Hitherto I have confined my reſearches concerning the knowledge which the ancients had of India, to the continent; I return now to conſider the diſcoveries which they had made, of the iſlands ſituated in various parts of the ocean with which it is ſurrounded, and begin, as I propoſed, with Taprobane, the greateſt and moſt valuable of them. This iſland lay ſo directly in the courſe of navigators who ventured beyond Cape Comorin, eſpecially when, according to the ancient mode of ſailing, they ſeldom ventured far from the coaſt, that its poſition, one ſhould have thought, muſt have been determined with the utmoſt preciſion. There is, however, hardly any point in the geography of the ancients more undecided and uncertain. Prior to the age of Alexander the Great, the name of Taprobane was unknown in Europe. In conſequence of the active curioſity with which he explored every country that he ſubdued or viſited, ſome information concerning it ſeems to have been obtained. From his time, almoſt every writer on geography has mentioned it, but their accounts of it are ſo various, and often ſo contradictory, that we can hardly believe them to be deſcribing the ſame iſland. Strabo, the earlieſt writer now extant, from whom we have any particular account of it, affirms that it was as large as Britain, and ſituated at the diſtance of ſeven days, according to ſome reports, and according to other, of twenty days ſailing from the ſouthern extremity of the Indian peninſula; from which, contrary to what

what is known to be its real poſition, he deſcribes it as ſtretching towards the weſt above five hundred ſtadia [a]. Pomponius Mela, the author next in order of time, is uncertain whether he ſhould conſider Taprobane as an iſland, or as the beginning of another world; but as no perſon, he ſays, had ever ſailed round it, he ſeems to incline towards the latter opinion [a]. Pliny gives a more ample deſcription of Taprobane, which, inſtead of bringing any acceſſion of light, involves every thing relating to it in additional obſcurity. After enumerating the various and diſcordant opinions of the Greek writers, he informs us, that ambaſſadors were ſent by a king of that iſland to the emperor Claudius, from whom the Romans learned ſeveral things concerning it, which were formerly unknown; particularly that there were five hundred towns in the iſland, and that in the centre of it there was a lake three hundred and ſeventy-five miles in circumferenee. Theſe ambaſſadors were aſtoniſhed at the ſight of the Great Bear, and the Pleiades, being conſtellations which did not appear in their ſky; and were ſtill more amazed when they beheld their ſhadows point towards the north, and the ſun riſe on their left hand, and ſet on their right. They affirmed too, that in their country the moon was never ſeen until the eighth day after the change, and continued to be viſible only to the ſixteenth [b]. It is ſurpriſing to find an author ſo intelligent as Pliny relating all theſe circumſtances without animadverſion, and particularly that he does

[a] Strabo, lib. ii. 124. B. 180. B. 192. A. lib. xv. 1012. B.

[a] De Situ Orbis, lib. iii. c. 7.

[b] Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 22.

 not

SECT. II. not take notice, that what the ambassadors reported concerning the appearance of the moon, could not take place in any region of the earth.

PTOLEMY, though so near to the age of Pliny, seems to have been altogether unacquainted with his description of Taprobane, or with the embassy to the emperor Claudius. He places that island opposite to Cape Comorin, at no great distance from the continent, and delineates it as stretching from north to south no less than fifteen degrees, two of which he supposes to be south of the Equator; and if his representation of its dimensions had been just, it was well intitled from its magnitude to be compared with Britain [c]. Agathemerus, who wrote after Ptolemy, and was well acquainted with his geography, considers Taprobane as the largest of all islands, and assigns to Britain only the second place [d].

FROM this diversity of the descriptions given by ancient writers, it is not surprising that the moderns should have entertained very different sentiments with respect to the island in the Indian ocean which was to be considered as the same with the Taprobane of the Greeks and Romans. As both Pliny and Ptolemy describe it as lying in part to the south of the Equator, some learned men maintain Sumatra to be the island which corresponds to this description. But the great distance of Sumatra from the peninsula of India does not accord with any account

[c] Ptol. lib. vii. c. 4. D'Anville, Ant. de l'Inde, p. 142.
[d] Lib. ii. c. 8. apud Hudson. Geogr. Minor. vol. ii.

which the Greek or Roman writers have given of the ſituation of Taprobane, and we have no evidence that the navigation of the ancients ever extended ſo far as Sumatra. The opinion more generally received is, that the Taprobane of the ancients is the iſland of Ceylon; and not only its vicinity to the continent of India, but the general form of the iſland, as delineated by Ptolemy, as well as the poſition of ſeveral places in it, mentioned by him, eſtabliſh this opinion (notwithſtanding ſome extraordinary miſtakes, of which I ſhall afterwards take notice) with a great degree of certainty.

The other iſlands to the eaſt of Taprobane, mentioned by Ptolemy, might be ſhewn (if ſuch a detail were neceſſary) to be the Andaman and Nicobar Iſlands in the Gulf of Bengal.

After this long, and, I am afraid, tedious inveſtigation of the progreſs made by the ancients, in exploring the different parts of India, and after tracing them as far as they advanced towards the Eaſt, either by ſea or land, I ſhall offer ſome general remarks concerning the mode in which their diſcoveries were conducted, and the degree of confidence with which we may rely on the accounts of them, which could not have been offered with the ſame advantage until this inveſtigation was finiſhed.

The art of delineating maps, exhibiting either the figure of the whole earth, as far as it had been explored, or that of particular countries, was known to the ancients; and without the

SECT. II. the ufe of them to affift the imagination, it was impoffible to have formed a diftinct idea either of the one or of the other. Some of thefe maps are mentioned by Herodotus, and other early Greek writers. But no maps prior to thofe which were formed in order to illuftrate the geography of Ptolemy, have reached our times, in confequence of which it is very difficult to conceive what was the relative fituation of the different places mentioned by the ancient geographers, unlefs when it is precifely afcertained by meafurement *. As foon, however, as the mode of marking the fituation of each place by fpecifying its longitude and latitude was introduced, and came to be generally adopted, every pofition could be defcribed in compendious and fcientific terms. But ftill the accuracy of this new method, and the improvement which geography derived from it, depends upon the mode in which the ancients eftimated the latitude and longitude of places.

THOUGH the ancients proceeded in determining the latitude and longitude of places upon the fame principles with the moderns, yet it was by means of inftruments very inferior in their conftruction to thofe now ufed, and without the fame minute attention to every circumftance that may affect the accuracy of an obfervation, an attention of which long experience only can demonftrate the neceffity. In order to afcertain the latitude of any place, the ancients obferved the meridian altitude of the fun, either by means of the fhadow of a perpendicular gnomon, or by means of an aftrolabe, from which it was

* See NOTE XXXIII.

eafy

easy to compute how many degrees and minutes the place of observation was distant from the Equator. When neither of these methods could be employed, they inferred the latitude of any place from the best accounts which they could procure of the length of its longest day. SECT. II.

WITH respect to determining the longitude of any place, they were much more at a loss, as there was only one set of celestial phenomena to which they could have recourse. These were the eclipses of the moon (for those of the sun were not so well understood as to be subservient to the purposes of geography): the difference between the time at which an eclipse was observed to begin or to end at two different places, gave immediately the difference between the meridians of those places. But the difficulty of making those observations with accuracy, and the impossibility of repeating them often, rendered them of so little use in geography, that the ancients in determining longitudes were obliged, for the most part, to have recourse to actual surveys, or to the vague information which was to be obtained from the reckonings of sailors, or the itineraries of travellers.

BUT though the ancients, by means of the operations which I have mentioned, could determine the position of places with a considerable degree of accuracy at land, it is very uncertain whether or not they had any proper mode of determining this at sea. The navigators of antiquity seem rarely to have had recourse to astronomical observation. They had no instruments suited to a moveable and unsteady observatory;

SECT. II.

and though by their practice of landing frequently, they might, in fome meafure, have fupplied that defect, yet no ancient author, as far as I know, has given an account of any aftronomical obfervation made by them during the courfe of their voyages. It feems to be evident from Ptolemy, who employs fome chapters in fhewing how geography may be improved, and its errors may be rectified, from the reports of navigators [f], that all their calculations were founded folely upon reckoning, and were not the refult of obfervation. Even after all the improvements which the moderns have made in the fcience of navigation, this mode of computing by reckoning is known to be fo loofe and uncertain, that, from it alone, no conclufion can be deduced with any great degree of precifion. Among the ancients, this inaccuracy muft have been greatly augmented, as they were accuftomed in their voyages, inftead of fteering a direct courfe which might have been more eafily meafured, to a circuitous navigation along the coaft; and were unacquainted with the compafs, or any other inftrument by which its bearings might have been afcertained. We find, accordingly, the pofition of many places which we may fuppofe to have been determined at fea, fixed with little exactnefs. When, in confequence of an active trade, the ports of any country were much frequented, the reckonings of different navigators may have ferved in fome meafure to correct each other, and may have enabled geographers to form their conclufions with a nearer approximation to truth. But in remote countries, which have neither been the feat of military operations,

[f] Lib. i. c. 7—14.

nor

nor explored by caravans travelling frequently through them, every thing is more vague and undefined, and the resemblance between the ancient descriptions of them, and their actual figure, is often so faint that it can hardly be traced. The latitude of places too, as might be expected, was in general much more accurately known by the ancients than their longitude. The observations by which the former was determined are simple, made with ease, and are not liable to much error. The other cannot be ascertained precisely, without more complex operations, and the use of instruments much more perfect than any that the ancients seem to have possessed [g]. Among the vast number of places, the position of which is fixed by Ptolemy, I know not if he approaches as near to truth in the longitude of any one, as he has done in fixing the latitude of the three cities which I formerly mentioned as a striking, though not singular, instance of his exactness.

THESE observations induce me to adhere to an opinion, which I proposed in another place [h], that the Greeks and Romans, in their commercial intercourse with India, were seldom led, either by curiosity or the love of gain, to visit the more eastern parts of it. A variety of particulars occur to confirm this opinion. Though Ptolemy bestows the appellation of *Emporia* on several places situated on the coast, which stretches from the eastern mouth of the Ganges to the extremity of the Golden Chersonesus, it is uncertain, as I formerly observed, whether from his having given them this name, we are to consider them as harbours frequented by ships from Egypt, or merely by vessels of the country. Beyond the

[g] See NOTE XXXIV.

[h] Hist. of America, vol. i. p. 80. 315.

SECT. II.

Golden Cherſoneſus, it is remarkable that he mentions one *Emporium* only[1], which plainly indicates the intercourſe with this region of India to have been very inconſiderable. Had voyages from the Arabian Gulf to thoſe countries of India been as frequent, as to have intitled Ptolemy to ſpecify ſo minutely the longitude and latitude of the great number of places which he mentions, he muſt, in conſequence of this, have acquired ſuch information as would have prevented ſeveral great errors into which he has fallen. Had it been uſual to double Cape Comorin, and to ſail up the Bay of Bengal to the mouth of the Ganges, ſome of the ancient geographers would not have been ſo uncertain, and others ſo widely miſtaken, with reſpect to the ſituation and magnitude of the iſland of Ceylon. If the merchants of Alexandria had often viſited the ports of the Golden Cherſoneſus, and of the Great Bay, Ptolemy's deſcriptions of them muſt have been rendered more correſpondent to their real form, nor could he have believed ſeveral places to lie beyond the line, which are in truth ſome degrees on this ſide of it.

But though the navigation of the ancients may not have extended to the farther India, we are certain that various commodities of that country were imported into Egypt, and thence were conveyed to Rome, and to other parts of the empire. From circumſtances which I have already enumerated, we are warranted in concluding, that theſe were brought in veſſels of the country to Muſiris, and to the other ports on

[1] Lib. vii. c. 2.

the Malabar coaſt, which were, at that period, the ſtaples of trade with Egypt. In a country of ſuch extent as India, where the natural productions are various, and greatly diverſified by art and induſtry, an active domeſtic commerce, both by ſea and by land, muſt have early taken place among its different provinces. Of this we have ſome hints in ancient authors; and where the ſources of information are ſo few and ſo ſcanty, we muſt reſt ſatisfied with hints. Among the different claſſes, or caſts, into which the people of India were divided, merchants are mentioned as one[k], from which we may conclude trade to have been one of the eſtabliſhed occupations of men in that country. From the Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, we learn that the inhabitants of the Coromandel coaſt traded in veſſels of their own with thoſe of Malabar; that the interior trade of Barygaza was conſiderable; and that there was, at all ſeaſons, a number of country ſhips to be found in the harbour of Muſiris[l]. By Strabo we are informed, that the moſt valuable productions of Taprobane were carried to different *Emporia* of India[m]. In this way the traders from Egypt might be ſupplied with them, and thus could finiſh their voyages within the year, which muſt have been protracted much longer if they had extended as far towards the eaſt as is generally ſuppoſed.

FROM all this it appears to be probable, that Ptolemy derived the information concerning the eaſtern parts of India,

k Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 22.
l Perip. Mar. Erythr. 34, 30.
m Lib. ii. 124. B.

SECT. II. upon which he founds his calculations, not fo much from any direct and regular intercourfe between Egypt and thefe countries, as from the reports of a few adventurers, whom an enterprifing fpirit, or the love of gain, prompted to proceed beyond the ufual limits of navigation.

THOUGH, from the age of Ptolemy, the trade with India continued to be carried on in its former channel, and both Rome, the ancient capital of the empire, and Conftantinople, the new feat of government, were fupplied with the precious commodities of that country by the merchants of Alexandria, yet, until the reign of the emperor Juftinian, we have no new information concerning the intercourfe with the Eaft by fea, or the progrefs which was made in the difcovery of its remote regions. Under Juftinian, Cofmas, an Egyptian merchant, in the courfe of his traffic, made fome voyages to India, whence he acquired the firname of Indicopleuftes; but afterwards, by a tranfition not uncommon in that fuperftitious age, he renounced all the concerns of this life, and affumed the monaftic character. In the folitude and leifure of a cell, he compofed feveral works, one of which, dignified by him with the name of *Chriftian Topography*, has reached us. The main defign of it is to combat the opinion of thofe philofophers, who affert the earth to be of a fpherical figure, and to prove that it is an oblong plane, of twelve thoufand miles in length from eaft to weft, and of fix thoufand miles in breadth from north to fouth, furrounded by high walls, covered by the firmament as with a canopy or vault; that the viciffitude

of day and night was occafioned by a mountain of prodigious height, fituated in the extremities of the north, round which the fun moved; that when it appeared on one fide of this mountain, the earth was illuminated, when concealed on the other fide, the earth was left involved in darknefs [a]. But amidft thofe wild reveries, more fuited to the credulity of his new profeffion, than to the found fenfe characteriftic of that in which he was formerly engaged, Cofmas feems to relate what he himfelf had obferved in his travels, or what he had learned from others, with great fimplicity and regard for truth.

He appears to have been well acquainted with the weft coaft of the Indian peninfula, and names feveral places fituated upon it; he defcribes it as the chief feat of the pepper trade, and mentions Male, in particular, as one of the moft frequented ports on that account [o]. From Male, it is probable that this fide of the continent has derived its modern name of Malabar; and the clufter of iflands contiguous to it, that of the Maldives. From him too we learn, that the ifland of Taprobane, which he fuppofes to lie at an equal diftance from the Perfian Gulf on the weft, and the country of the Sinæ on the eaft, had become, in confequence of this commodious fituation, a great ftaple of trade; that into it were imported the filk of the Sinæ, and the precious fpices of the Eaftern countries, which were conveyed thence to all parts of India, to Perfia, and to the Arabian Gulf. To this ifland he

[a] Cofmas ap. Montfaucon Collect. Patrum, ii. 113, &c. 138.

[o] Cofm. lib. ii. p. 138. lib. xi. 337.

gives

SECT. II. gives the name of Sielediba[p], the same with that of Selendib, or Serendib, by which it is still known all over the East.

To Cosmas we are also indebted for the first information of a new rival to the Romans in trade having appeared in the Indian seas. The Persians, after having overturned the empire of the Parthians, and re-established the line of their ancient monarchs, seem to have surmounted entirely the aversion of their ancestors to maritime exertion, and made early and vigorous efforts in order to acquire a share in the lucrative commerce with India. All its considerable ports were frequented by traders from Persia, who, in return for some productions of their own country in request among the Indians, received the precious commodities, which they conveyed up the Persian Gulf, and by means of the great rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, distributed them through every province of their empire. As the voyage from Persia to India was much shorter than that from Egypt, and attended with less expence and danger, the intercourse between the two countries increased rapidly. A circumstance is mentioned by Cosmas which is a striking proof of this. In most of the cities of any note in India he found Christian churches established, in which the functions of religion were performed by priests ordained by the archbishop of Seleucia, the capital of the Persian empire, and who continued subject to his jurisdiction[q]. India appears to have been more thoroughly explored at this period, than it was in the age of Ptolemy, and a greater number of strangers

[p] Lib. xi. 336. [q] Cosm. lib. iii. 178.

seem

seem to have been settled there. It is remarkable, however, that, according to the account of Cosmas, none of these strangers were accustomed to visit the eastern regions of Asia, but rested satisfied with receiving their silk, their spices, and other valuable productions, as they were imported into Ceylon, and conveyed thence to the various marts of India [r].

The frequency of open hostilities between the emperors of Constantinople and the monarchs of Persia, together with the increasing rivalship of their subjects in the trade with India, gave rise to an event which produced a considerable change in the nature of that commerce. As the use of silk, both in dress and furniture, became gradually more general in the court of the Greek emperors, who imitated and surpassed the sovereigns of Asia in splendour and magnificence; and as China, in which, according to the concurring testimony of Oriental writers, the culture of silk was originally known [s], still continued to be the only country which produced that valuable commodity; the Persians, improving the advantages which their situation gave them over the merchants from the Arabian Gulf, supplanted them in all the marts of India to which silk was brought by sea from the East. Having it likewise in their power to molest or to cut off the caravans, which, in order to procure a supply for the Greek empire, travelled by land to China, through the northern provinces of the kingdom, they entirely engrossed that branch of commerce. Constantinople was obliged to depend on a rival power for an article which luxury

[r] Lib. xi. 337. [s] Herbelot Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Harir.*

SECT. II. viewed and desired as essential to elegance. The Persians, with the usual rapacity of monopolists, raised the price of silk to such an exorbitant height[t], that Justinian, eager not only to obtain a full and certain supply of a commodity which was become of indispensable use, but solicitous to deliver the commerce of his subjects from the exactions of his enemies, endeavoured, by means of his ally, the Christian monarch of Abyssinia, to wrest some portion of the silk trade from the Persians. In this attempt he failed; but when he least
A.D. 551. expected it, he, by an unforeseen event, attained, in some measure, the object which he had in view. Two Persian monks having been employed as missionaries in some of the Christian churches, which were established (as we are informed by Cosmas) in different parts of India, had penetrated into the country of the Seres, or China. There they observed the labours of the silk-worm, and became acquainted with all the arts of man in working up its productions into such a variety of elegant fabrics. The prospect of gain, or perhaps an indignant zeal, excited by seeing this lucrative branch of commerce engrossed by unbelieving nations, prompted them to repair to Constantinople. There they explained to the emperor the origin of silk, as well as the various modes of preparing and manufacturing it, mysteries hitherto unknown, or very imperfectly understood in Europe; and encouraged by his liberal promises, they undertook to bring to the capital a sufficient number of those wonderful insects, to whose labours man is so much indebted. This they accomplished by conveying the eggs of the

[t] Procop. Hist. Arcan. c. 25.

silk-

ſilk-worm in a hollow cane. They were hatched by the heat of a dunghill, fed with the leaves of a wild mulberry tree, and they multiplied and worked in the ſame manner as in thoſe climates where they firſt became objects of human attention and care [u]. Vaſt numbers of theſe inſects were ſoon reared in different parts of Greece, particularly in the Peloponeſus. Sicily afterwards undertook to breed ſilk-worms with equal ſucceſs, and was imitated, from time to time, in ſeveral towns of Italy. In all theſe places extenſive manufactures were eſtabliſhed, and carried on, with ſilk of domeſtic production. The demand for ſilk from the Eaſt diminiſhed of courſe, the ſubjects of the Greek emperors were no longer obliged to have recourſe to the Perſians for a ſupply of it, and a conſiderable change took place in the nature of the commercial intercourſe between Europe and India [x].

[u] Procop. de Bello Gothic. lib. iv. c. 17.

[x] See NOTE XXXV.

AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION III.

Intercourse with India, from the Conquest of Egypt by the Mahomedans, to the Discovery of the Passage by the Cape of Good Hope, and the Establishment of the Portuguese Dominion in the East.

SECT. III.

ABOUT fourscore years after the death of Justinian, an event happened, which occasioned a revolution still more considerable in the intercourse of Europe with the East. Mahomet, by publishing a new religion, seems to have animated his countrymen with a new spirit, and to have called forth

SECT. III. latent paſſions and talents into exertion. The greateſt part of the Arabs, ſatisfied from the earlieſt times with national independence and perſonal liberty, tended their camels, or reared their palm-trees, within the precincts of their own peninſula, and had little intercourſe with the reſt of mankind, unleſs when they ſallied out to plunder a caravan, or to rob a traveller. In ſome diſtricts, however, they had begun to add the labours of agriculture, and the buſineſs of commerce, to the occupations of paſtoral life. All theſe orders of men, when prompted by the enthuſiaſtic ardour with which the exhortations and example of Mahomet inſpired them, diſplayed, at once, all the zeal of miſſionaries, and the ambition of conquerors. They ſpread the doctrine of their prophet, and extended the dominion of his ſucceſſors, from the ſhores of the Atlantic to the frontier of China, with a rapidity of ſucceſs to which

A. D. 640. there is nothing ſimilar in the hiſtory of mankind. Egypt was one of their earlieſt conqueſts; and as they ſettled in that inviting country, and kept poſſeſſion of it, the Greeks were excluded from all intercourſe with Alexandria, to which they had long reſorted as the chief mart of Indian goods. Nor was this the only effect which the progreſs of the Mahomedan arms had upon the commerce of Europe with India. Prior to their invaſion of Egypt, the Arabians had ſubdued the great kingdom of Perſia, and added it to the empire of their Caliphs. They found their new ſubjects engaged in proſecuting that extenſive trade with India, and the country to the eaſt of it, the commencement and progreſs of which in Perſia I have already mentioned; and they were ſo ſenſible of the great advantages derived from it, that they became deſirous to partake

of them. As the active powers of the human mind, when roufed to vigorous exertions in one line, are moft capable of operating with force in other directions; the Arabians, from impetuous warriors, foon became enterprifing merchants. They continued to carry on the trade with India in its former channel from the Perfian Gulf, but it was with that ardour which characterizes all the early efforts of Mahomet's followers. In a fhort time they advanced far beyond the boundaries of ancient navigation, and brought many of the moft precious commodities of the Eaft directly from the countries which produced them. In order to engrofs all the profit arifing from the fale of them, the Caliph Omar *, a few years after the conqueft of Perfia, founded the city of Baffora, on the weftern banks of the great ftream formed by the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris, with a view of fecuring the command of thefe two rivers, by which goods imported from India were conveyed into all parts of Afia. With fuch difcernment was the fituation chofen, that Baffora foon became a place of trade hardly inferior to Alexandria.

THIS general information with refpect to the trade of the Arabians with India, which is all that can be derived from the hiftorians of that period, is confirmed and illuftrated by the Relation of a Voyage from the Perfian Gulf towards the Eaft, written by an Arabian merchant in the year of the Chriftian æra eight hundred and fifty-one, about two centuries

* Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Bafrah.*

after

SECT. III. after Persia was subjected to the Caliphs, and explained by the Commentary of another Arabian, who had likewise visited the Eastern parts of Asia [b]. This curious Relation, which enables us to fill up a chasm in the history of mercantile communication with India, furnishes materials for describing more in detail the extent of the Arabian discoveries in the East, and the manner in which they made them.

Though some have imagined that the wonderful property of the magnet, by which it communicates such virtue to a needle or slender rod of iron, as to make it point towards the poles of the earth, was known in the East long before it was observed in Europe, it is manifest, both from the Relation of the Mahometan merchant, and from much concurring evidence, that not only the Arabians, but the Chinese, were destitute of this faithful guide, and that their mode of navigation was not more adventrous than that of the Greeks and Romans [c]. They steered servilely along the coast, seldom stretching out to sea so far as to lose sight of land, and as they shaped their course in this timid manner, their mode of reckoning was defective, and liable to the same errors which I observed in that of the Greeks and Romans [d].

Notwithstanding these disadvantages, the progress of the Arabians towards the East extended far beyond the Gulf

[b] See NOTE XXXVI. [c] Relation, p. 2. 8, &c.

[d] Renaudot. Inquiry into the Time when the Mahomedans first entered China, p. 143.

of Siam, the boundary of European navigation. They became acquainted with Sumatra, and the other islands of the great Indian Archipelago, and advanced as far as the city of Canton in China. Nor are these discoveries to be considered as the effect of the enterprising curiosity of individuals; they were owing to a regular commerce carried on from the Persian Gulf with China, and all the intermediate countries. Many Mahomedans, imitating the example of the Persians described by Cosmas Indicopleustes, settled in India and the countries beyond it. They were so numerous in the city of Canton, that the emperor (as the Arabian authors relate) permitted them to have a Cadi or judge of their own sect, who decided controversies among his countrymen by their own laws, and presided in all the functions of religion [e]. In other places proselytes were gained to the Mahomedan faith, and the Arabian language was understood and spoken in almost every sea-port of any note. Ships from China and different places of India traded in the Persian Gulf [f], and by the frequency of mutual intercourse, all the nations of the East became better acquainted with each other [g].

A STRIKING proof of this is the new information concerning China and India we receive from the two authors I have mentioned. They point out the situation of Canton, now so well known to Europeans, with a considerable degree of exactness. They take notice of the general use of silk among the

[e] Relation, p. 7. Remarks, p. 19. Inquiry, p. 171, &c.
[f] See NOTE XXXVII.
[g] Relation, p. 8.

Chinese.

SECT. III. Chinefe. They are the firft who mention their celebrated manufacture of porcelane, which, on account of its delicacy and tranfparency, they compare to glafs. They defcribe the tea-tree, and the mode of ufing its leaves; and from the great revenue which was levied (as they inform us) from the confumption of it, tea feems to have been as univerfally the favourite beverage of the Chinefe in the ninth century, as it is at prefent [h].

EVEN with refpect to thofe parts of India which the Greeks and Romans were accuftomed to vifit, the Arabians had acquired more perfect information. They mention a great empire eftablifhed on the Malabar coaft, governed by monarchs whofe authority was paramount to that of every power in India. Thefe monarchs were diftinguifhed by the appellation of *Balchara*, a name yet known in India [i], and it is probable that the Samorin, or emperor of Calicut, fo frequently mentioned in the accounts of the firft voyages of the Portuguefe to India, poffeffed fome portion of their dominions. They celebrate the extraordinary progrefs which the Indians had made in aftronomical knowledge, a circumftance which feems to have been unknown to the Greeks and Romans, and affert that in this branch of fcience they were far fuperior to the moft enlightened nations of the Eaft, on which account their fovereign was denominated the King of Wifdom [k]. Other peculiarities in the political inftitutions, the mode of judicial

[h] Relation, p. 21. 25.

[i] Herbelot, artic. *Hind.* & *Belhar.*

[k] Relation, p. 37. 53.

proceedings,

proceedings, the paſtimes, and the ſuperſtitions of the Indians, particularly the excruciating mortifications and penances of the faquirs, might be produced as proofs of the ſuperior knowledge which the Arabians had acquired of the manners of that people.

The ſame commercial ſpirit, or religious zeal, which prompted the Mahomedans of Perſia to viſit the remoteſt regions of the Eaſt, animated the Chriſtians of that kingdom. The Neſtorian churches planted in Perſia, under the protection firſt of its native ſovereigns, and afterwards of its conquerors the Caliphs, were numerous, and governed by reſpectable eccleſiaſtics. They had early ſent miſſionaries into India, and eſtabliſhed churches in different parts of it, particularly, as I have formerly related, in the Iſland of Ceylon. When the Arabians extended their navigation as far as China, a more ample field, both for their commerce and their zeal, opened to their view. If we may rely on the concurring evidence of Chriſtian authors, in the Eaſt as well as in the Weſt, confirmed by the teſtimony of the two Mahomedan travellers, their pious labours were attended with ſuch ſucceſs, that in the ninth and tenth centuries the number of Chriſtians in India and China was very conſiderable[1]. As the churches in both theſe countries received all their eccleſiaſtics from Perſia, where they were ordained by the *Catholicos*, or Neſtorian Primate, whoſe ſupremacy they acknowledged, this became a regular channel of intercourſe and intelligence; and to the combined effect of all theſe circum-

[1] See NOTE XXXVIII.

SECT. III. ftances, we are indebted for the information we receive from the two Arabian writers [m], concerning thofe regions of Afia which the Greeks and Romans never vifited.

But while both the Mahomedan and Chriftian fubjects of the Caliphs continued to extend their knowledge of the Eaft, the people of Europe found themfelves excluded almoft entirely from any intercourfe with it. To them the great port of Alexandria was now fhut, and the new lords of the Perfian Gulf, fatisfied with fupplying the demand in their own vaft dominions for the commodities of the Eaft, neglected to convey them, by any of the ufual channels, to the trading towns on the Mediterranean. The opulent inhabitants of Conftantinople, and other great cities of Europe, bore this deprivation of luxuries, to which they had been long accuftomed, with fuch impatience, that all the activity of commerce was exerted, in order to find a remedy for an evil which they deemed intolerable. The difficulties which were to be furmounted in order to accomplifh this, afford the moft ftriking proof of the high eftimation in which the commodities of the Eaft were held at that time. The filk of China was purchafed in Chenfi, the wefternmoft province of that empire, and conveyed thence by a caravan, in a march of eighty or a hundred days, to the banks of the Oxus, where it was embarked, and carried down the ftream of that river to the Cafpian. After a dangerous voyage acrofs that fea, and afcending the river Cyrus as far as it is navigable, it was conducted by a fhort land-carriage

[m] Relation, p. 39.

of

of five days to the river Phasis[n], which falls into the Euxine or Black Sea. Thence, by an easy and well known course, it was transported to Constantinople. The conveyance of commodities from that region of the East, now known by the name of Indostan, was somewhat less tedious and operose. They were carried from the banks of the Indus, by a route early frequented, and which I have already described, either to the river Oxus, or directly to the Caspian, from which they held the same course to Constantinople.

It is obvious, that only commodities of small bulk, and of considerable value, could bear the expence of such a mode of conveyance; and in regulating the price of those commodities, not only the expence, but the risque and danger of conveying them, were to be taken into account. In their journey across the vast plain extending from Samarcande to the frontier of China, caravans were exposed to the assaults and depredations of the Tartars, the Huns, the Turks, and other roving tribes which infest the north-east of Asia, and which have always considered the merchant and traveller as their lawful prey; nor were they exempt from insult and pillage in their journey from the Cyrus to the Phasis, through the kingdom of Colchis, a country noted, both in ancient and in modern times, for the thievish disposition of its inhabitants. Even under all these disadvantages, the trade with the East was carried on with ardour. Constantinople became a considerable mart of Indian and Chinese commodities, and the wealth which flowed into it

[n] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 17.

SECT. III. in conſequence of this, not only added to the ſplendour of that great city, but ſeems to have retarded, for ſome time, the decline of the empire of which it was the capital.

As far as we may venture to conjecture, from the imperfect information of cotemporary hiſtorians, it was chiefly by the mode of conveyance which I have deſcribed, perilous and operoſe as it was, that Europe was ſupplied with the commodities of the Eaſt, during more than two centuries. Throughout that period the Chriſtians and Mahomedans were engaged in almoſt uninterrupted hoſtilities; proſecuted with all the animoſity which rivalſhip for power, heightened by religious zeal, naturally excites. Under circumſtances which occaſioned ſuch alienation, commercial intercourſe could hardly ſubſiſt, and the merchants of Chriſtendom either did not reſort at all to Alexandria, and the ports of Syria, the ancient ſtaples for the commodities of the Eaſt, after they were in poſſeſſion of the Mahomedans, or if the love of gain, ſurmounting their abhorrence of the Infidels, prompted them to viſit the marts which they had long frequented, it was with much caution and diſtruſt.

WHILE the difficulties of procuring the productions of the Eaſt were thus augmented, the people of Europe became more deſirous of obtaining them. About this time ſome cities of Italy, particularly Amalphi and Venice, having acquired a greater degree of independence than they formerly poſſeſſed, began to cultivate the arts of domeſtic induſtry, with an ardour and ingenuity uncommon in the middle ages. The effect of

theſe exertions was ſuch an increaſe of wealth, as created new wants and deſires, and formed a taſte for elegance and luxury, which induced them to viſit foreign countries in order to gratify it. Among men in this ſtage of their advancement, the productions of India have always been held in high eſtimation, and from this period they were imported into Italy in larger quantities, and came into more general uſe. Several circumſtances which indicate this revival of a commercial ſpirit, are collected by the induſtrious Muratori, and, from the cloſe of the ſeventh century, an attentive obſerver may diſcern faint traces of its progreſs [o].

EVEN in enlightened ages, when the tranſactions of nations are obſerved and recorded with the greateſt care, and the ſtore of hiſtorical materials ſeems to be abundantly ample, ſo little attention has been paid to the operations of commerce, that every attempt towards a regular deduction of them, has been found an undertaking of the utmoſt difficulty. The æra, however, to which I have conducted this Diſquiſition, is one of the periods in the annals of mankind concerning which hiſtory furniſhes moſt ſcanty information. As it was chiefly in the Greek empire, and in ſome cities of Italy, that any efforts were made to procure the commodities of India, and the other regions of the Eaſt, it is only from the Hiſtorians of thoſe countries we can expect to find any account of that trade. But from the age of Mahomet, until the time when

[o] Antiquit. Ital. medij Ævi, ii. 400. 408. 410. 883. 885. 894. Rer. Ital. Script. ii. 487.

the

SECT. III. the Comneni afcended the throne of Conftantinople, a period of more than four centuries and a half, the Byzantine hiftory is contained in meagre chronicles, the compilers of which feldom extended their views beyond the intrigues in the palace, the factions in the theatre, or the difputes of theologians. To them the monkifh annalifts of the different ftates and cities of Italy, during the fame period, are (if poffible) far inferior in merit, and in the early accounts of thofe cities which have been moft celebrated for their commercial fpirit, we fearch with little fuccefs for the origin or nature of that trade by which they firft rofe to eminence [p]. It is manifeft, however, from the flighteft attention to the events which happened in the feventh and eighth centuries, that the Italian ftates, while their coafts were continually infefted by the Mahomedans, who had made fome fettlements there, and had fubjected Sicily almoft entirely to their dominion, could not trade with much confidence and fecurity in Egypt and Syria. With what implacable hatred Chriftians viewed Mahomedans, as the difciples of an impoftor, is well known; and as all the nations which profeffed the Chriftian faith, both in the Eaft and Weft, had mingled the worfhip of angels and faints with that of the Supreme Being, and had adorned their churches with pictures and ftatues; the true Moflems confidered themfelves as the only affertors of the unity of God, and beheld Chriftians of every denomination with abhorrence, as idolaters. Much time was requifite to foften this mutual animofity, fo far as to render intercourfe in any degree cordial.

[p] See NOTE XXXIX.

MEAN-

MEANWHILE a taſte for the luxuries of the Eaſt continued not only to ſpread in Italy, but, from imitation of the Italians, or from ſome improvement in their own ſituation, the people of Marſeilles, and other towns of France on the Mediterranean, became equally fond of them. But the profits exacted by the merchants of Amalphi or Venice, from whom they received thoſe precious commodities, were ſo exorbitant as prompted them to make ſome effort to ſupply their own demands. With this view, they not only opened a trade with Conſtantinople, but ventured at times to viſit the ports of Egypt and Syria [a]. This eagerneſs of the Europeans, on the one hand, to obtain the productions of India, and, on the other hand, the immenſe advantages which both the Caliphs and their ſubjects derived from the ſale of them, induced both ſo far to conceal their reciprocal antipathy, as to carry on a traffic manifeſtly for their common benefit. How far this traffic extended, and in what mode it was conducted by theſe new adventurers, the ſcanty information which can be gathered from contemporary writers, does not enable me to trace with accuracy. It is probable, however, that this communication would have produced inſenſibly its uſual effect, of familiarizing and reconciling men of hoſtile principles and diſcordant manners to one another, and a regular commerce might have been eſtabliſhed gradually between Chriſtians and Mahometans, upon ſuch equal terms, that the nations of Europe might have received all the luxuries of the Eaſt, by the ſame channels in which they were formerly conveyed to them, firſt by the

[a] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxvii. p. 467, &c. 483.

SECT. III. Tyrians, then by the Greeks of Alexandria, next by the Romans, and at laſt by the ſubjects of the Conſtantinopolitan empire.

But whatever might have been the influence of this growing correſpondence, it was prevented from operating with full effect by the cruſades, or expeditions for the recovery of the Holy Land, which, during two centuries, occupied the profeſſors of the two rival religions, and contributed to alienate them more than ever from each other. I have, in another work[r], contemplated mankind while under the dominion of this frenzy, the moſt ſingular, perhaps, and the longeſt continued, of any that occurs in the hiſtory of our ſpecies; and I pointed out ſuch effects of it upon government, upon property, upon manners and taſte, as were ſuited to what were then the objects of my enquiry. At preſent my attention is confined to obſerve the commercial conſequences of the cruſades, and how far they contributed to retard, or to promote, the conveyance of Indian commodities into Europe.

To fix an idea of peculiar ſanctity to that country, which the Author of our Religion ſelected as the place of his reſidence while on earth, and in which he accompliſhed the redemption of mankind, is a ſentiment ſo natural to the human mind, that, from the firſt eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, the viſiting of the holy places in Judea was conſidered as an exerciſe of piety, tending powerfully to awaken and to cheriſh

[r] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 26. edit. 1787.

a ſpirit

a ſpirit of devotion. Through ſucceeding ages, the practice continued, and increaſed in every part of Chriſtendom. When Jeruſalem was ſubjected to the Mahomedan empire, and danger was added to the fatigue and expence of a diſtant pilgrimage, the undertaking was viewed as ſtill more meritorious. It was ſometimes enjoined as a penance to be performed by heinous tranſgreſſors. It was more frequently a duty undertaken with voluntary zeal, and in both caſes it was deemed an expiation for all paſt offences. From various cauſes, which I have elſewhere enumerated [a], theſe pious viſits to the Holy Land multiplied amazingly during the tenth and eleventh centuries. Not only individuals in the lower and middle ranks of life, but perſons of ſuperior condition, attended by large retinues, and numerous caravans of opulent pilgrims, reſorted to Jeruſalem.

In all their operations, however, men have a wonderful dexterity in mingling ſome attention to intereſt with thoſe functions which ſeem to be moſt purely ſpiritual. The Mahomedan caravans which, in obedience to the injunctions of their religion, viſit the holy temple of Mecca, are not compoſed, as I ſhall hereafter explain more fully, of devout pilgrims only, but of merchants, who, both in going and returning, are provided with ſuch an aſſortment of goods, that they carry on a conſiderable traffic [b]. Even the Faquirs of India, whoſe wild enthuſiaſm ſeems to elevate them above all ſolici-

[a] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 27. 285.

[b] Viaggi di Ramuſio, vol. i. p. 151, 152.

SECT. III. tude about the concerns of this world, have rendered their frequent pilgrimages ſubſervient to their intereſt, by trading in every country through which they travel [u]. In like manner, it was not by devotion alone that ſuch numerous bands of Chriſtian pilgrims were induced to viſit Jeruſalem. To many of them commerce was the chief motive of undertaking that diſtant voyage, and by exchanging the productions of Europe for the more valuable commodities of Aſia, particularly thoſe of India, which at that time were diffuſed through every part of the Caliphs dominions, they enriched themſelves, and furniſhed their countrymen with ſuch an additional ſupply of Eaſtern luxuries, as augmented their reliſh for them [x].

But how faint ſoever the lines may be, which, prior to the cruſades, mark the influence of the frequent pilgrimages to the Eaſt upon commerce, they become ſo conſpicuous after the commencement of theſe expeditions, as to meet the eye of every obſerver. Various circumſtances concurred towards this, from an enumeration of which it will appear, that by attending to the progreſs and effects of the cruſades, conſiderable light is thrown upon the ſubject of my inquiries. Great armies, conducted by the moſt illuſtrious nobles of Europe, and compoſed of men of the moſt enterpriſing ſpirit in all the kingdoms of it, marched towards Paleſtine, through countries far advanced beyond thoſe which they left, in every ſpecies of improvement. They beheld the dawn of proſperity in the

[u] See NOTE XL.

[x] Gul. Tyr. lib. xvii. c. 4. p. 933. ap. Geſta Dei per Francos.

republics

republics of Italy, which had begun to vie with each other in the arts of induſtry, and in their efforts to engroſs the lucrative commerce with the Eaſt. They next admired the more advanced ſtate of opulence and ſplendour in Conſtantinople, raiſed to a pre-eminence above all the cities then known, by its extenſive trade, particularly that which it carried on with India, and the countries beyond it. They afterwards ſerved in thoſe provinces of Aſia through which the commodities of the Eaſt were uſually conveyed, and became maſters of ſeveral cities which had been ſtaples of that trade. They eſtabliſhed the kingdom of Jeruſalem, which ſubſiſted near two hundred years. They took poſſeſſion of the throne of the Greek empire, and governed it above half a century. Amidſt ſuch a variety of events and operations, the ideas of the fierce warriors of Europe gradually opened and improved; they became acquainted with the policy and arts of the people whom they ſubdued; they obſerved the ſources of their wealth, and availed themſelves of all this knowledge. Antioch and Tyre, when conquered by the cruſaders, were flouriſhing cities, inhabited by opulent merchants, who ſupplied all the nations trading in the Mediterranean with the productions of the Eaſt[r], and as far as can be gathered from incidental occurrences, mentioned by the Hiſtorians of the Holy War, who, being moſtly prieſts and monks, had their attention directed to objects very different from thoſe relating to commerce, there is reaſon to believe that both in Conſtantinople, while ſubject

[r] Gul. Tyr. lib. xiii. c. 5. Alb. Aquenſ. Hiſt. Hieroſ. ap. Geſta Dei, vol. i. p. 247.

SECT. III. to the Franks, and in the ports of Syria acquired by the Christians, the long-established trade with the East continued to be protected and encouraged.

BUT though commerce may have been only a secondary object with the martial leaders of the crusades, engaged in perpetual hostilities with the Turks on one hand, and with the Soldans of Egypt on the other, it was the primary object with the associates, in conjunction with whom they carried on their operations. Numerous as the armies were which assumed the cross, and enterprising as the fanatical zeal was with which they were animated, they could not have accomplished their purpose, or even have reached the seat of their warfare, without securing the assistance of the Italian states. None of the other European powers could either furnish a sufficient number of transports to convey the armies of the crusaders to the coast of Dalmatia, whence they marched to Constantinople, the place of general rendezvous; or were able to supply them with military stores and provisions in such abundance as to enable them to invade a distant country. In all the successive expeditions, the fleets of the Genoese, of the Pisans, or of the Venetians, kept on the coast as the armies advanced by land, and supplying them, from time to time, with whatever was wanting, engrossed all the profits of a branch of commerce which, in every age, has been extremely lucrative. It was with all the interested attention of merchants, that the Italians afforded their aid. On the reduction of any place in which they found it for their interest to settle, they obtained from the crusaders valuable immunities of different kinds; freedom

of trade; an abatement of the usual duties paid for what was imported and exported, or a total exemption from them; the property of entire suburbs in some cities, and of extensive streets in others; and a privilege granted to every person who resided within their precincts, or who traded under their protection, of being tried by their own laws, and by judges of their own appointment[a]. In consequence of so many advantages, we can trace, during the progress of the crusades, a rapid increase of wealth and of power in all the commercial states of Italy. Every port open to trade was frequented by their merchants, who, having now engrossed entirely the commerce of the East, strove with such active emulation to find new markets for the commodities which it furnished, that they extended a taste for them to many parts of Europe in which they had hitherto been little known.

Two events happened, prior to the termination of the Holy War, which, by acquiring to the Venetians and Genoese the possession of several provinces in the Greek empire, enabled them to supply Europe more abundantly with all the productions of the East. The first was the conquest of Constantinople, in the year one thousand two hundred and four, by the Venetians, and the leaders of the fourth crusade. An account of the political interests and intrigues which formed this alliance, and turned the hallowed arms destined to deliver the Holy City from the dominion of infidels, against a Christian monarch, is foreign from the design of this Disquisition.

[a] Hist. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 34.

Constan-

SECT. III. Conftantinople was taken by ftorm, and plundered by the confederates. An earl of Flanders was placed on the Imperial throne. The dominions which ftill remained fubject to the fucceffors of Conftantine, were divided into four parts, one of which being allotted to the new emperor, for fupporting the dignity and expence of government, an equal partition of the other three was made between the Venetians and the chiefs of the crufade. The former, who, both in concerting and in conducting this enterprife, kept their eye fteadily fixed on what might be moft for the emolument of their commerce, fecured the territories of greateft value to a trading people. They obtained fome part of the Peloponnefus, at that time the feat of flourifhing manufactures, particularly of filk. They became mafters of feveral of the largeft and beft cultivated iflands in the Archipelago, and eftablifhed a chain of fettlements, partly military and partly commercial, extending from the Adriatic to the Bofphorus [a]. Many Venetians fettled in Conftantinople, and without obftruction from their warlike affociates, little attentive to the arts of induftry, they engroffed the various branches of trade which had fo long enriched that capital. Two of thefe particularly attracted their attention; the filk trade, and that with India. From the reign of Juftinian, it was moftly in Greece, and fome of the adjacent iflands, that filk-worms, which he firft introduced into Europe, were reared. The product of their labours was manufactured into ftuffs of various kinds in many cities of the empire.

[a] Danduli Chronic. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xii. p. 328. Mar. Sanuto Vite de Duchi di Venez. Murat. vol. xxii. p. 532.

But

But it was in Conſtantinople, the ſeat of opulence and luxury, that the demand for a commodity of ſuch high price was greateſt, and there, of conſequence, the commerce of ſilk naturally centered. In aſſorting cargoes for the ſeveral ports in which they traded, the Venetians had for ſome time found ſilk to be an eſſential article, as it continued to grow more and more into requeſt in every part of Europe. By the reſidence of ſo many of their citizens in Conſtantinople, and by the immunities granted to them, they not only procured ſilk in ſuch abundance, and on ſuch terms, as enabled them to carry on trade more extenſively, and with greater profit than formerly, but they became ſo thoroughly acquainted with every branch of the ſilk manufacture, as induced them to attempt the eſtabliſhment of it in their own dominions. The meaſures taken for this purpoſe by individuals, as well as the regulations framed by the ſtate, were concerted with ſo much prudence, and executed with ſuch ſucceſs, that in a ſhort time the ſilk fabrics of Venice vied with thoſe of Greece and Sicily, and contributed both to enrich the republic, and to enlarge the ſphere of its commerce. At the ſame time, the Venetians availed themſelves of the influence which they had acquired in Conſtantinople, in order to improve their Indian trade. The capital of the Greek empire, beſides the means of being ſupplied with the productions of the Eaſt, which it enjoyed in common with the other commercial cities of Europe, received a conſiderable portion of them by a channel peculiar to itſelf. Some of the moſt valuable commodities of India and China were conveyed over land, by routes which I have deſcribed, to the Black Sea, and thence by a ſhort navigation

to

SECT. III. to Conſtantinople. To this market, the beſt ſtored of any except Alexandria, the Venetians had now eaſy acceſs, and the goods which they purchaſed there, made an addition of great conſequence to what they were accuſtomed to acquire in the ports of Egypt and Syria. Thus while the Latin empire in Conſtantinople ſubſiſted, the Venetians poſſeſſed ſuch advantages over all their rivals, that their commerce extended greatly, and it was chiefly from them every part of Europe received the commodities of the Eaſt.

The other event which I had in view, was the ſubverſion of the dominion of the Latins in Conſtantinople, and the re-eſtabliſhment of the Imperial family on the throne. This was effected after a period of fifty-ſeven years, partly by a tranſient effort of vigour, with which indignation at a foreign yoke animated the Greeks, and partly by the powerful aſſiſtance which they received from the republic of Genoa. The Genoeſe were ſo ſenſible of the advantages which the Venetians, their rivals in trade, derived from their union with the Latin emperors of Conſtantinople, that in order to deprive them of theſe, they ſurmounted the moſt deep-rooted prejudices of their age, and combined with the ſchiſmatic Greeks to dethrone a monarch protected by the Papal power, ſetting at defiance the thunders of the Vatican, which at that time made the greateſt princes tremble. This undertaking, bold and impious as it was then deemed, proved ſucceſsful. In recompence for their ſignal ſervices, the gratitude or weakneſs of the Greek emperor, among other donations, beſtowed upon the Genoeſe Pera, the chief ſuburb of Conſtantinople, to be held as a fief of the empire, together

together with ſuch exemption from the accuſtomed duties on goods imported and exported, as gave them a decided ſuperiority over every competitor in trade. With the vigilant attention of merchants, the Genoeſe availed themſelves of this favourable ſituation. They ſurrounded their new ſettlement in Pera with fortifications. They rendered their factories on the adjacent coaſts places of ſtrength [b]. They were maſters of the harbour of Conſtantinople more than the Greeks themſelves. The whole trade of the Black Sea came into their hands; and not ſatisfied with this, they took poſſeſſion of part of the Cherſoneſus Taurica, the modern Crimæa, and rendered Caffa, its principal town, the chief ſeat of their trade with the Eaſt, and the port in which all its productions, conveyed to the Black Sea by the different routes I have formerly deſcribed, were landed [c].

In conſequence of this revolution, Genoa became the greateſt commercial power in Europe; and if the enterpriſing induſtry and intrepid courage of its citizens had been under the direction of wiſe domeſtic policy, it might have long held that rank. But never was there a contraſt more ſtriking, than between the internal adminiſtration of the two rival republics of Venice and Genoa. In the former, government was conducted with ſteady ſyſtematic prudence; in the latter, it was

[b] Niceph. Gregor. lib. xi. c. 1. §. 6. lib. xvii. c. 1. §. 2.

[c] Folieta Hiſt. Genuenſ. ap. Græv. Theſ. Antiq. Ital. i. 387. De Marinis de Genuenſ. Dignit. ib. 1486. Niceph. Greg. lib. xiii. c. 12. Murat. Annal. d'Ital. lib. vii. c. 351. See NOTE XLI.

SECT. III.

confiftent in nothing but a fondnefs for novelty, and a propenfity to change. The one enjoyed a perpetual calm, the other was agitated with all the ftorms and viciffitudes of faction. The increafe of wealth, which flowed into Genoa from the exertions of its merchants, did not counterbalance the defects in its political conftitution; and even in its moft profperous ftate we may difcern the appearance of fymptoms which foreboded a diminution of its opulence and power.

As long, however, as the Genoefe retained the afcendant which they had acquired in the Greek empire, the Venetians felt their commercial tranfactions with it to be carried on upon fuch unequal terms, that their merchants vifited Conftantinople feldom, and with reluctance; and in order to procure the commodities of the Eaft in fuch quantities as were demanded in the various parts of Europe which they were accuftomed to fupply, they were obliged to refort to the ancient ftaples of that trade. Of thefe Alexandria was the chief, and the moft abundantly fupplied, as the conveyance of Indian goods by land through Afia, to any of the ports of the Mediterranean, was often rendered impracticable by the incurfions of Turks, Tartars, and other hordes, which fucceffively defolated that fertile country, or contended for the dominion of it. But under the military and vigorous government of the Soldans of the Mameluks, fecurity and order were fteadily maintained in Egypt, and trade, though loaded with heavy duties, was open to all. In proportion to the progrefs of the Genoefe, in engroffing the commerce of Conftantinople and the Black Sea,

Sea[d], the Venetians found it more and more neceſſary to enlarge their tranſactions with Alexandria. SECT. III.

But ſuch an avowed intercourſe with infidels being conſidered, in that age, as unbecoming the character of Chriſtians, the ſenate of Venice, in order to ſilence its own ſcruples, or thoſe of its ſubjects, had recourſe to the infallible authority of the Pope, who was ſuppoſed to be poſſeſſed of power to diſpenſe with the rigorous obſervation of the moſt ſacred laws, and obtained permiſſion from him to fit out annually a ſpecified number of ſhips for the ports of Egypt and of Syria[e]. Under this ſanction, the republic concluded a treaty of commerce with the Soldans of Egypt, on equitable terms; in conſequence of which the ſenate appointed one conſul to reſide in Alexandria, and another in Damaſcus, in a public character, and to exerciſe a mercantile juriſdiction, authoriſed by the Soldans. Under their protection, Venetian merchants and artiſans ſettled in each of theſe cities. Ancient prejudices and antipathies were forgotten, and their mutual intereſts eſtabliſhed, for the firſt time, a fair and open trade between Chriſtians and Mahomedans[f].

While the Venetians and Genoeſe were alternately making thoſe extraordinary efforts, in order to engroſs all the advantages of ſupplying Europe with the productions of the Eaſt, the republic of Florence, originally a commercial democracy,

[d] See NOTE XLII. [e] See NOTE XLIII.
[f] Sandi Storia Civile Veneziana, lib. v. c. 15. p. 248, &c.

SECT. III.

applied with ſuch perſevering vigour to trade, and the genius of the people, as well as the nature of their inſtitutions, were ſo favourable to its progreſs, that the ſtate advanced rapidly in power, and the people in opulence. But as the Florentines did not poſſeſs any commodious ſea-port, their active exertions were directed chiefly towards the improvement of their manufactures, and domeſtic induſtry. About the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Florentine manufactures of various kinds, particularly thoſe of ſilk and woollen cloth, appear from the enumeration of a well-informed Hiſtorian, to have been very conſiderable[8]. The connection which they formed in different parts of Europe, by furniſhing them with the productions of their own induſtry, led them to engage in another branch of trade, that of banking. In this they ſoon became ſo eminent, that the money-tranſactions of almoſt every kingdom in Europe paſſed through their hands, and in many of them they were entruſted with the collection and adminiſtration of the public revenues. In conſequence of the activity and ſucceſs with which they conducted their manufactures and money-tranſactions, the former always attended with certain though moderate profit, the latter lucrative in an high degree, at a period when neither the intereſt of money, nor the premium on bills of exchange, were ſettled with accuracy, Florence became one of the firſt cities in Chriſtendom, and many of its citizens extremely opulent. Coſmo di Medici, the head of a family which roſe from obſcurity by its ſucceſs in trade, was reckoned the moſt wealthy merchant ever known in Eu-

[8] Giov. Villani Hiſt. Fiorent. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xiii. p. 823.

rope;

rope[h]; and in acts of public munificence, as well as of private generosity, in the patronage of learning, and in the encouragement of useful and elegant arts, no monarch of the age could vie with him. Whether the Medici, in their first mercantile transactions, carried on any commerce with the East, I have not been able to discover[i]. It is more probable, I should think, that their trade was confined to the same articles with that of their countrymen. But as soon as the commonwealth, by the conquest of Pisa, had acquired a communication with the ocean, Cosmo di Medici, who had the chief direction of its affairs, endeavoured to procure for his country a share in that lucrative commerce, which had raised Venice and Genoa so far above all the other Italian states. With this view ambassadors were sent to Alexandria, in order to prevail with the Soldan to open that, and the other ports of his dominions, to the subjects of the republic, and to admit them to a participation of all the commercial privileges which were enjoyed by the Venetians. The negociation terminated with such success, that the Florentines seem to have obtained some share in the Indian trade[k]; and soon after this period, we find spices enumerated among the commodities imported by the Florentines into England[l].

SECT. III.

A.C. 1405.

A.C. 1425.

[h] Fr. Mich. Brutus Hist. Flor. p. 37, 62. Chron. Eugubinum ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xiv. p. 1007. Denina Revol. d' Italie, tom. vi. p. 263, &c.

[i] See NOTE XLIV. [k] See NOTE XLV.

[l] Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 193.

In

SECT. III.

In ſome parts of this Diſquiſition, concerning the nature and courſe of trade with the Eaſt, I have been obliged to grope my way, and often under the guidance of very feeble lights. But as we are now approaching to the period when the modern ideas, with reſpect to the importance of commerce, began to unfold, and attention to its progreſs and effects became a more conſiderable object of policy, we may hope to carry on what reſearches yet remain to be made, with greater certainty and preciſion. To this growing attention we are indebted for the account which Marino Sanudo, a Venetian nobleman, gives of the Indian trade, as carried on by his countrymen, about the beginning of the fourteenth century. They were ſupplied, as he informs us, with the productions of the Eaſt in two different ways. Thoſe of ſmall bulk and high value, ſuch as cloves, nutmegs, mace, gems, pearls, &c. were conveyed from the Perſian Gulf up the Tigris to Baſſora, and thence to Bagdat, from which they were carried to ſome port on the Mediterranean. All more bulky goods, ſuch as pepper, ginger, cinnamon, &c. together with ſome portion of the more valuable articles, were conveyed by the ancient route to the Red Sea, and thence acroſs the deſart, and down the Nile to Alexandria. The goods received by the former route were, as Sanudo obſerves, of ſuperior quality but from the tedioufneſs and expence of a diſtant land-carriage, the ſupply was often ſcanty, nor can he conceal (though contrary to a favourite project which he had in view when he wrote the treatiſe to which I refer) that, from the ſtate of the countries through which the caravans paſſed, this

mode of conveyance was frequently precarious, and attended with danger [m]. SECT. III.

It was in Alexandria only, that the Venetians found always a certain and full ſupply of Indian goods; and as theſe were conveyed thither chiefly by water-carriage, they might have purchaſed them at a moderate price, if the Soldans had not impoſed upon them duties which amounted to a third part of their full value. Under this and every other diſadvantage, however, it was neceſſary to procure them, as from many concurring circumſtances, particularly a more extenſive intercourſe eſtabliſhed among the different nations of Europe, the demand for them continued to increaſe greatly during the fourteenth century. By the irruptions of the various hoſtile tribes of Barbarians, who took poſſeſſion of the greater part of Europe, that powerful bond by which the Romans had united together all the people of their vaſt empire was entirely diſſolved, and ſuch diſcouragement was given to the communication of one nation with another, as would appear altogether incredible, if the evidence of it reſted only upon the teſtimony of hiſtorians, and were not confirmed by what is ſtill more authentic, the expreſs enactment of laws. Several ſtatutes of this kind, which diſgrace the juriſprudence of almoſt every European nation, I have enumerated and explained in another work [n]. But when the wants and deſires of men multiplied, and they found that other countries could furniſh the means of ſupplying

[m] Mar. Sanuti Secreta Fidelium Crucis, p. 22, &c. ap. Bongarſium.
[n] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 92. 291. &c.

and

SECT. III. and gratifying them, the hoftile fentiments which kept nations at a diftance from each other abated, and mutual correfpondence gradually took place. From the time of the crufades, which firft brought people hardly known to one another, to affociate and to act in concert during two centuries, in purfuit of one common end, feveral circumftances had co-operated towards accelerating this general intercourfe. The people around the Baltic, hitherto dreaded and abhorred by the reft of Europe as pirates and invaders, affumed more pacific manners, and began now to vifit their neighbours as merchants. Occurrences foreign from the fubject of the prefent inquiry, united them together in the powerful commercial confederacy fo famous in the middle ages, under the name of the Hanfeatic League, and led them to eftablifh the ftaple of their trade with the fouthern parts of Europe in Bruges. Thither the merchants of Italy, particularly thofe of Venice, reforted; and in return for the productions of the Eaft, and the manufactures of their own country, they received not only the naval ftores and other commodities of the North, but a confiderable fupply of gold and filver from the mines in various provinces of Germany, the moft valuable and productive of any known at that time in Europe [o]. Bruges continued to be the great mart or ftorehoufe of European trade during the period to which my inquiries extend. A regular communication, formerly unknown, was kept up there among all the kingdoms into which our continent is divided, and we are enabled to account for the rapid progrefs of the Italian ftates in wealth and power, by obferving

[o] Zimmermann's Polit. Survey of Europe, p. 102.

how much their trade, the fource from which both were derived, muft have augmented upon the vaft increafe in the confumption of Afiatic goods, when all the extenfive countries towards the north-eaft of Europe were opened for their reception.

DURING this profperous and improving ftate of Indian commerce, Venice received from one of its citizens, fuch new information concerning the countries which produced the precious commodities that formed the moft valuable article of its trade, as gave an idea of their opulence, their population, and their extent, which rofe far above all the former conceptions of Europeans. From the time that the Mahomedans became mafters of Egypt, as no chriftian was permitted to pafs through their dominions to the Eaft[p], the direct intercourfe of Europeans with India ceafed entirely. The account of India by Cofmas Indico-pleuftes in the fixth century, is, as far as I know, the laft which the nations of the Weft received from any perfon who had vifited that country. But about the middle of the thirteenth century, the fpirit of commerce, now become more enterprizing, and more eager to difcover new routes which led to wealth, induced Marco Polo, a Venetian of a noble family, after trading for fome time in many of the opulent cities of the leffer Afia, to penetrate into the more eaftern parts of that continent, as far as to the court of the Great Khan on the frontier of China. During the courfe of twenty-fix years, partly employed in mercantile tranfactions, and partly in conducting

[p] Sanuto, p. 23.

SECT. III. negociations with which the Great Khan entrusted him, he explored many regions of the East which no European had ever visited.

He describes the great kingdom of Cathay, the name by which China is still known in many parts of the East[q], and travelled through it from Chambalu, or Peking, on its northern frontier, to some of its most southern provinces. He visited different parts of Indostan, and is the first who mentions Bengal and Guzzerat, by their present names, as great and opulent kingdoms. Besides what he discovered in his journies by land, he made more than one voyage in the Indian ocean, and acquired some information concerning an island which he calls Zipangri or Cipango, probably Japan. He visited in person Java, and several islands contiguous to it, the island of Ceylon, and the coast of Malabar as far as the Gulf of Cambay, to all which he gives the names that they now bear. This was the most extensive survey hitherto made of the East, and the most complete description of it ever given by any European; and in an age which had hardly any knowledge of those regions but what was derived from the geography of Ptolemy, not only the Venetians, but all the people of Europe, were astonished at the discovery of immense countries opened to their view beyond what had hitherto been reputed the utmost boundary of the earth in that quarter[r].

But while men of leisure and speculation occupied themselves with examining the discoveries of Marco Polo, which gave rise

[q] Herbelot Bib. Orient. artic. *Khathai.* Stewart, Account of Thibet, Phil. Transf. lxvii. 474. Voyage of A. Jenkinson, Hakluyt. i. 333.

[r] See NOTE XLVI.

to conjectures and theories, productive of most important consequences; an event happened, that drew the attention of all Europe, and had a most conspicuous effect upon the course of that trade, the progress of which I am endeavouring to trace. SECT. III.

The event to which I allude, is the final conquest of the Greek empire by Mahomet II. and the establishing the seat of the Turkish government in Constantinople. The immediate effect of this great revolution was, that the Genoese residing in Pera, involved in the general calamity, were obliged not only to abandon that settlement, but all those which they had made on the adjacent sea-coast, after they had been in their possession near two centuries. Not long after, the victorious arms of the Sultan expelled them from Caffa, and every other place which they held in the Crimea[a]. Constantinople was no longer a mart open to the nations of the West for Indian commodities, and no supply of them could now be obtained but in Egypt and the ports of Syria, subject to the Soldans of the Mameluks. The Venetians, in consequence of the protection and privileges which they had secured by their commercial treaty with those powerful princes, carried on trade in every part of their dominions with such advantage, as gave them a superiority over every competitor. Genoa, which had long been their most formidable rival, humbled by the loss of its possessions in the East, and weakened by domestic dissensions, declined so fast, that it was obliged to court foreign protection, and submitted alternately to the dominion of the Dukes of Milan and the Kings of France. In consequence of this diminution of their political

A.D. 1453.

A.D. 1474.

[a] Folieta Hist. Genu. 602, 626. Murat. Annali d'Ital. ix. 451.

 power,

SECT. III. power, the commercial exertions of the Genoese became less vigorous. A feeble attempt which they made to recover that share of the Indian trade which they had formerly enjoyed, by offering to enter into treaty with the Soldans of Egypt upon terms similar to those which had been granted to the Venetians, proved unsuccessful; and during the remainder of the fifteenth century, Venice supplied the greater part of Europe with the productions of the East, and carried on trade to an extent far beyond what had been known in those times.

THE state of the other European nations was extremely favourable to the commercial progress of the Venetians. England, desolated by the civil wars which the unhappy contest between the houses of York and Lancaster excited, had hardly begun to turn its attention towards those objects and pursuits to which it is indebted for its present opulence and power. In France, the fatal effects of the English arms and conquests were still felt, and the king had neither acquired power, nor the people inclination, to direct the national genius and activity to the arts of peace. The union of the different kingdoms of Spain was not yet completed; some of its most fertile provinces were still under the dominion of the Moors, with whom the Spanish monarchs waged perpetual war; and, except by the Catalans, little attention was paid to foreign trade. Portugal, though it had already entered upon that career of discovery which terminated with most splendid success, had not yet made such progress in it as to be entitled to any high rank among the commercial states of Europe. Thus the Venetians, almost without rival or competitor, except from some of the inferior

inferior Italian ſtates, were left at liberty to concert and to execute their mercantile plans; and the trade with the cities of the Hanſeatic League, which united the North and South of Europe, and which hitherto had been common to all the Italians, was now engroſſed, in a great meaſure, by them alone.

While the increaſing demand for the productions of Aſia induced all the people of Europe to court intercourſe with the Venetians ſo eagerly, as to allure them, by various immunities, to frequent their ſea-ports, we may obſerve a peculiarity in their mode of carrying on trade with the Eaſt, which diſtinguiſhes it from what has taken place in other countries in any period of hiſtory. In the ancient world, the Tyrians, the Greeks who were maſters of Egypt, and the Romans, ſailed to India in queſt of thoſe commodities with which they ſupplied the people of the Weſt. In modern times, the ſame has been the practice of the Portugueſe, the Dutch, the Engliſh, and, after their example, of other European nations. In both periods loud complaints have been made, that in carrying on this trade every ſtate muſt be drained of the precious metals which, in the courſe of it, flow inceſſantly from the Weſt to the Eaſt, never to return. From whatever loſs might have been occaſioned by this gradual but unavoidable diminution of their gold and ſilver (whether a real or only an imaginary loſs, it is not incumbent upon me, in this place, to inquire or to determine), the Venetians were, in a great meaſure, exempted. They had no direct intercourſe with India. They found in Egypt, or in Syria, warehouſes filled with all the commodities of the Eaſt, imported by the Mahomedans;

SECT. III. homedans; and from the best accounts we have, with respect to the nature of their trade, they purchased them more frequently by barter, than with ready money. Egypt, the chief mart for Indian goods, though a most fertile country, is destitute of many things requisite in an improved state of society, either for accommodation or for ornament. Too limited in extent, and too highly cultivated to afford space for forests; too level to have mines of the useful metals; it must be supplied with timber for building, with iron, lead, tin, and brass, by importation from other countries. The Egyptians, while under the dominion of the Mameluks, seem not themselves to have traded in the ports of any Christian state, and it was principally from the Venetians that they received all the articles which I have enumerated. Besides these, the ingenuity of the Venetian artists furnished a variety of manufactures of woollen cloths, silk stuffs of various fabric, camblets, mirrors, arms, ornaments of gold and silver, glass, and many other articles, for all which they found a ready market in Egypt and Syria. In return they received from the merchants of Alexandria, spices of every kind, drugs, gems, pearls, ivory, cotton and silk, unwrought as well as manufactured, in many different forms, and other productions of the East, together with several valuable articles of Egyptian growth or fabric. In Aleppo, Baruth, and other cities, besides the proper commodities of India brought thither by land, they added to their cargoes the carpets of Persia, the rich wrought silks of Damascus, still known by a name taken from that city, and various productions of art and nature peculiar to Syria, Palestine, and Arabia. If, at any time, their demand for the productions of the East went

went beyond what they could procure in exchange for their own manufactures, that trade with the cities of the Hanseatic League, which I have mentioned, furnished them from the mines of Germany, with a regular supply of gold and silver, which they could carry, with advantage, to the markets of Egypt and Syria.

FROM a propensity, remarkable in all commercial states, to subject the operations of trade to political regulation and restraint, the authority of the Venetian government seems to have been interposed, both in directing the importation of Asiatic goods, and in the mode of circulating them among the different nations of Europe. To every considerable staple in the Mediterranean a certain number of large vessels, known by the name of *Galeons* or *Caracks*, was fitted out on the public account, and returned loaded with the richest merchandise [t], the profit arising from the sale of which must have been no slender addition to the revenue of the republic. Citizens, however, of every class, particularly persons of noble families, were encouraged to engage in foreign trade, and whoever employed a vessel of a certain burden for this purpose, received a considerable bounty from the state [u]. It was in the same manner, partly in ships belonging to the public, and partly in those of private traders, that the Venetians circulated through Europe the goods imported from

[t] Sabellicus, Hist. Rer. Venet. Dec. iv. lib. iii. p. 868. Denina Revol. d' Italie, tom. vi. 340.

[u] Sandi Stor. Ciu. Venez. lib. viii. 891.

the

SECT. III.

the Eaſt, as well as the produce of their own dominions and manufactures.

THERE are two different ways by which we may come at ſome knowledge of the magnitude of thoſe branches of commerce carried on by the Venetians. The one, by attending to the great variety and high value of the commodities which they imported into Bruges, the ſtore-houſe from which the other nations of Europe were ſupplied. A full enumeration of theſe is given by a well-informed author, in which is contained almoſt every article deemed, in that age, eſſential to accommodation or to elegance [x]. The other, by conſidering the effects of the Venetian trade upon the cities admitted to a participation of its advantages. Never did wealth appear more conſpicuouſly in the train of commerce. The citizens of Bruges, enriched by it, diſplayed in their dreſs, their buildings, and mode of living, ſuch magnificence as even to mortify the pride and excite the envy of royalty [y]. Antwerp, when the ſtaple was removed thither, ſoon rivalled Bruges in opulence and ſplendour. In ſome cities of Germany, particularly in Augſburg, the great mart for Indian commodities in the interior parts of that extenſive country, we meet with early examples of ſuch large fortunes accumulated by mercantile induſtry, as raiſed the proprietors of them to high rank and conſideration in the empire.

[x] Lud. Guicciardini Deſcript. de Paeſi Baſſi, p. 173.

[y] See NOTE XLVII.

FROM obſerving this remarkable increaſe of opulence in all the places where the Venetians had an eſtabliſhed trade, we are led to conclude, that the profit accruing to themſelves from the different branches of it, eſpecially that with the Eaſt, muſt have been ſtill more conſiderable. It is impoſſible, however, without information much more minute than that to which we have acceſs, to form an eſtimate of this with accuracy; but various circumſtances may be produced to eſtabliſh, in general, the juſtneſs of this concluſion. From the firſt revival of a commercial ſpirit in Europe, the Venetians poſſeſſed a large ſhare of the trade with the Eaſt. It continued gradually to increaſe, and during a great part of the fifteenth century, they had nearly a monopoly of it. This was productive of conſequences attending all monopolies. Wherever there is no competition, and the merchant has it in his power to regulate the market, and to fix the price of the commodities which he vends, his gains will be exorbitant. Some idea of their magnitude, during ſeveral centuries, may be formed, by attending to the rate of the premium or intereſt then paid for the uſe of money. This is undoubtedly the moſt exact ſtandard by which to meaſure the profit ariſing from the capital ſtock employed in commerce; for, according as the intereſt of money is high or low, the gain acquired by the uſe of it muſt vary, and become exceſſive or moderate. From the cloſe of the eleventh century to the commencement of the ſixteenth, the period during which the Italians made their chief commercial exertions, the rate of intereſt was extremely high. It was uſually twenty per cent. ſometimes above that; and ſo late as the year one thouſand five hundred, it had not ſunk below

SECT. III. ten or twelve per cent. in any part of Europe [z]. If the profits of a trade so extensive as that of the Venetians corresponded to this high value of money, it could not fail of proving a source of great wealth, both public and private [a]. The condition of Venice, accordingly, during the period under review, is described by writers of that age, in terms which are not applicable to that of any other country in Europe. The revenues of the republic, as well as the wealth amassed by individuals, exceeded whatever was elsewhere known. In the magnificence of their houses, in richness of furniture, in profusion of plate, and in every thing which contributed either towards elegance or parade in their mode of living, the nobles of Venice surpassed the state of the greatest monarch beyond the Alps. Nor was all this display the effect of an ostentatious and inconsiderate dissipation, it was the natural consequence of successful industry, which, having accumulated wealth with ease, is entitled to enjoy it in splendour [b].

NEVER did the Venetians believe the power of their country to be more firmly established, or rely with greater confidence on the continuance and increase of its opulence, than towards the close of the fifteenth century, when two events (which they could neither foresee nor prevent) happened, that proved fatal to both. The one was the discovery of America. The other was the opening a direct course of navigation to the East Indies, by the Cape of Good Hope. Of all occurrences in

[z] Hist. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 401, &c.
[a] See NOTE XLVIII. [b] See NOTE XLIX.

the hiſtory of the human race, theſe are undoubtedly among the moſt intereſting; and as they occaſioned a remarkable change of intercourſe among the different quarters of the globe, and finally eſtabliſhed thoſe commercial ideas and arrangements which conſtitute the chief diſtinction between the manners and policy of ancient and of modern times, an account of them is intimately connected with the ſubject of this Diſquiſition, and will bring it to that period which I have fixed upon for its boundary. But as I have related the riſe and progreſs of theſe diſcoveries at great length in another work [c], a rapid view of them is all that is requiſite in this place.

The admiration or envy with which the other nations of Europe beheld the power and wealth of Venice, led them naturally to enquire into the cauſes of this pre-eminence; and among theſe, its lucrative commerce with the Eaſt appeared to be by far the moſt conſiderable. Mortified with being excluded from a ſource of opulence, which to the Venetians had proved ſo abundant, different countries had attempted to acquire a ſhare of the Indian trade. Some of the Italian ſtates (as I have formerly hinted) endeavoured to obtain admiſſion into the ports of Egypt and Syria, upon the ſame terms with the Venetians; but either by the ſuperior intereſt of the Venetians in the court of the Soldans, their negociations for that purpoſe were rendered unſucceſsful; or from the manifold advantages which merchants, long in poſſeſſion of any branch of trade, have in a competition with new adventurers,

[c] Hiſt. of America, Books I. and II.

SECT. III. all their exertions did not produce effects of any consequence[d]. In other countries, various schemes were formed with the same view. As early as the year one thousand four hundred and eighty, the inventive and enterprising genius of Columbus conceived the idea of opening a shorter and more certain communication with India, by holding a direct westerly course towards those regions, which, according to Marco Polo and other travellers, extended eastward far beyond the utmost limits of Asia known to the Greeks or Romans. This scheme, supported by arguments deduced from a scientific acquaintance with cosmography, from his own practical knowledge of navigation, from the reports of skilful pilots, and from the theories and conjectures of the ancients, he proposed first to the Genoese his countrymen, and next to the king of Portugal, into whose service he had entered. It was rejected by the former from ignorance, and by the latter with circumstances most humiliating to a generous mind. By perseverance, however, and address, he at length induced the most wary and least adventurous court in Europe to undertake the execution of his plan; and Spain, as the reward of this deviation from its usual cautious maxims, had the glory of discovering a new world, hardly inferior in magnitude to a third part of the habitable globe. Astonishing as the success of Columbus was, it did not fully accomplish his own wishes, or conduct him to those regions of the East, the expectation of reaching which was the original object of his voyage. The effects, however, of his discoveries were great and extensive. By giving Spain

[d] See NOTE L.

the

the poſſeſſion of immenſe territories, abounding in rich mines, and many valuable productions of nature, ſeveral of which had hitherto been deemed peculiar to India, wealth began to flow ſo copiouſly into that kingdom, and thence was ſo diffuſed over Europe, as gradually awakened a general ſpirit of induſtry, and called forth exertions, which alone muſt have ſoon turned the courſe of commerce into new channels.

BUT this was accompliſhed more ſpeedily, as well as more completely, by the other great event which I mentioned, the diſcovery of a new route of navigation to the Eaſt by the Cape of Good Hope. When the Portugueſe, to whom mankind are indebted for opening this communication between the moſt remote parts of the habitable globe, undertook their firſt voyage of diſcovery, it is probable that they had nothing farther in view than to explore thoſe parts of the coaſt of Africa which lay neareſt to their own country. But a ſpirit of enterpriſe, when rouſed and put in motion, is always progreſſive; and that of the Portugueſe, though ſlow and timid in its firſt operations, gradually acquired vigour, and prompted them to advance along the weſtern ſhore of the African continent, far beyond the utmoſt boundary of ancient navigation in that direction. Encouraged by ſucceſs, it became more adventurous, deſpiſed dangers which formerly appalled it, and ſurmounted difficulties which it once deemed inſuperable. When the Portugueſe found in the torrid zone, which the ancients had pronounced to be uninhabitable, fertile countries, occupied by numerous nations; and perceived that the continent of Africa, inſtead of extending in breadth towards the Weſt, according to the

SECT. III. the opinion of Ptolemy, appeared to contract itſelf, and to bend Eaſtwards, more extenſive proſpects opened to their view, and inſpired them with hopes of reaching India, by continuing to hold the ſame courſe which they had ſo long purſued.

AFTER ſeveral unſucceſsful attempts to accompliſh what they had in view, a ſmall ſquadron ſailed from the Tagus, under the command of Vaſco de Gama, an officer of rank, whoſe abilities and courage fitted him to conduct the moſt difficult and arduous enterpriſes. From unacquaintance, however, with the proper ſeaſon and route of navigation in that vaſt ocean through which he had to ſteer his courſe, his voyage was long and dangerous. At length he doubled that promontory, which, for ſeveral years, had been the object of terror and of hope to his countrymen. From that, after a proſperous navigation along the ſouth-eaſt of Africa, he arrived at the city of Melinda, and had the ſatisfaction of diſcovering there, as well as at other places where he touched, people of a race very different from the rude inhabitants of the Weſtern ſhore of that continent, which alone the Portugueſe had hitherto viſited. Theſe he found to be ſo far advanced in civilization, and acquaintance with the various arts of life, that they carried on an active commerce, not only with the nations on their own coaſt, but with remote countries of Aſia. Conducted by their pilots, who held a courſe (with which experience had rendered them well acquainted) he ſailed acroſs the Indian ocean, and landed at Calecut, on the coaſt of Malabar, on the twenty-ſecond of May, one thouſand four hundred and ninety-eight, ten months and two days after his departure from the port of Liſbon.

THE

The Samorin, or Monarch of the country, aſtoniſhed at this unexpected viſit of an unknown people, whoſe aſpect, and arms, and manners, bore no reſemblance to any of the nations accuſtomed to frequent his harbours, and who arrived in his dominions by a route hitherto deemed impracticable, received them, at firſt, with that fond admiration which is often excited by novelty. But in a ſhort time, as if he had been inſpired with foreſight of all the calamities now approaching India by this fatal communication opened with the inhabitants of Europe, he formed various ſchemes to cut off Gama and his followers. But from every danger to which he was expoſed, either by the open attacks or ſecret machination of the Indians, the Portuguese Admiral extricated himſelf with ſingular prudence and intrepidity, and at laſt ſailed from Calecut with his ſhips loaded, not only with the commodities peculiar to that coaſt, but with many of the rich productions of the Eaſtern parts of India.

On his return to Liſbon, he was received with the admiration and gratitude due to a man, who, by his ſuperior abilities and reſolution, had conducted to ſuch an happy iſſue an undertaking of the greateſt importance, which had long occupied the thoughts of his Sovereign, and excited the hopes of his fellow-ſubjects [e]. Nor did this event intereſt the Portugueſe alone. No nation in Europe beheld it with unconcern. For although the diſcovery of a new world, whether we view it as a diſplay of genius in the perſon who firſt conceived an idea of that undertaking which led mankind to the knowledge of it, whether

[e] Aſia de João de Barros, dec. i. lib. iv. c. 11. Caſtagneda, Hiſt. de l'Inde trad. en Francois, liv. i. c. 2—28.

we

SECT. III.

we contemplate its influence upon ſcience by giving a more complete knowledge of the globe which we inhabit, or whether we conſider its effects upon the commercial intercourſe of mankind, be an event far more ſplendid than the voyage of Gama, yet the latter ſeems originally to have excited more general attention. The former, indeed, filled the minds of men with aſtoniſhment; it was ſome time, however, before they attained ſuch a ſufficient knowledge of that portion of the earth now laid open to their view, as to form any juſt idea, or even probable conjecture, with reſpect to what might be the conſequences of communication with it. But the immenſe value of the Indian trade, which both in ancient and in modern times had enriched every nation by which it was carried on, was a ſubject familiar to the thoughts of all intelligent men, and they at once perceived that the diſcovery of this new route of navigation to the Eaſt, muſt occaſion great revolutions, not only in the courſe of commerce, but in the political ſtate of Europe.

What theſe revolutions were moſt likely to be, and how they would operate, were points examined with particular attention in the cities of Liſbon and of Venice, but with feelings very different. The Portugueſe, founding upon the rights to which, in that age, priority of diſcovery, confirmed by a papal grant, were ſuppoſed to confer, deeming themſelves intitled to an excluſive commerce with the countries which they had firſt viſited, began to enjoy, by anticipation, all the benefits of it, and to fancy that their capital would ſoon be what Venice then was, the great ſtore-houſe of Eaſtern commodities to all Europe, and the ſeat of opulence and power. On the firſt

6 intelligence

intelligence of Gama's succefsful voyage, the Venetians, with the quick-fighted difcernment of merchants, forefaw the immediate confequence of it to be the ruin of that lucrative branch of commerce which had contributed fo greatly to enrich and aggrandize their country; and they obferved this with more poignant concern, as they were apprehenfive that they did not poffefs any effectual means of preventing, or even retarding, its operation.

THE hopes and fears of both were well founded. The Portuguefe entered upon the new career opened to them with activity and ardour, and made exertions, both commercial and military, far beyond what could have been expected from a kingdom of fuch inconfiderable extent. All thefe were directed by an intelligent monarch, capable of forming plans of the greateft magnitude with calm fyftematic wifdom, and of profecuting them with unremitting perfeverance. The prudence and vigour of his meafures, however, would have availed little without proper inftruments to carry them into execution. Happily for Portugal, the difcerning eye of Emanuel felected a fucceffion of officers to take the fupreme command in India, who, by their enterprizing valour, military fkill, and political fagacity, accompanied with difinterefted integrity, public fpirit, and love of their country, have a title to be ranked with the perfons moft eminent for virtue and abilities in any age or nation. Greater things perhaps were atchieved by them, than were ever accomplifhed in fo fhort a time. Before the clofe of Emanuel's reign, twenty-four years only after the voyage of Gama, the Portuguefe had rendered themfelves mafters of the city of Malacca, in which the great ftaple of trade carried on

SECT. III. among the inhabitants of all thoſe regions in Aſia, which Europeans have diſtinguiſhed by the general name of the Eaſt-Indies, was then eſtabliſhed. To this port, ſituated nearly at an equal diſtance from the Eaſtern and Weſtern extremities of theſe countries, and poſſeſſing the command of that ſtrait, by which they keep communication with each other, the merchants of China, of Japan, of every kingdom on the continent, of the Moluccas and all the iſlands in the Archipelago, reſorted from the Eaſt; and thoſe of Malabar, of Ceylon, of Coromandel, and of Bengal, from the Weſt [f]. This conqueſt ſecured to the Portugueſe great influence over the interior commerce of India, while, at the ſame time, by their ſettlements at Goa and Diu, they were enabled to engroſs the trade of the Malabar coaſt, and to obſtruct greatly the long eſtabliſhed intercourſe of Egypt with India by the Red Sea. Their ſhips frequented every port in the Eaſt where valuable commodities were to be found, from the Cape of Good Hope to the river of Canton; and along this immenſe ſtretch of coaſt, extending upwards of four thouſand leagues [g], they had eſtabliſhed, for the conveniency or protection of trade, a chain of forts or factories. They had likewiſe taken poſſeſſion of ſtations moſt favourable to commerce along the Southern coaſt of Africa, and in many of the iſlands which lie between Madagaſcar and the Moluccas. In every part of the Eaſt they were received with reſpect, in many they had acquired the abſolute command. They carried on trade there without

[f] Decad. de Barros, dec. i. liv. viii. c. i. Oſor. de reb. Eman. lib. vii. 213, &c.

[g] Hiſt. Gener. des Voyages, tom. i. p. 140.

rival or controul; they prescribed to the natives the terms of their mutual intercourse; they often set what price they pleased on the goods which they purchased; and were thus enabled to import from Indostan and the regions beyond it, whatever is useful, rare, or agreeable, in greater abundance, and of more various kinds, than had been known formerly in Europe.

Not satisfied with this ascendant which they had acquired in India, the Portuguese early formed a scheme, no less bold than interested, of excluding all other nations from participating of the advantages of commerce with the East. In order to effect this, it was necessary to obtain possession of such stations in the Arabian and Persian Gulfs, as might render them masters of the navigation of these two inland seas, and enable them both to obstruct the ancient commercial intercourse between Egypt and India, and to command the entrance of the great rivers, which facilitated the conveyance of Indian goods, not only through the interior provinces of Asia, but as far as Constantinople. The conduct of the measures for this purpose was committed to Alphonso Albuquerque, the most eminent of all the Portuguese generals who distinguished themselves in India. After the utmost efforts of genius and valour, he was able to accomplish one-half only of what the ambition of his countrymen had planned. By wresting the island of Ormus, which commanded the mouth of the Persian Gulf, from the petty princes, who, as tributaries to the monarchs of Persia, had established their dominion there, he secured to Portugal that extensive trade with the East, which (as I have formerly described) the Persians had carried on for

 several

SECT. III. ſeveral centuries. In the hands of the Portugueſe, Ormuz ſoon became the great mart from which the Perſian empire, and all the provinces of Aſia to the weſt of it, were ſupplied with the productions of India; and a city which they built on that barren iſland, deſtitute of water, was rendered one of the chief ſeats of opulence, ſplendour, and luxury in the Eaſtern world[h].

THE operations of Albuquerque in the Red Sea were far from being attended with equal ſucceſs. Partly by the vigorous reſiſtance of the Arabian princes, whoſe ports he attacked, and partly by the damage his fleet ſuſtained in a ſea of which the navigation is remarkably difficult and dangerous, he was conſtrained to retire, without effecting any ſettlement of importance[i]. The ancient channel of intercourſe with India by the Red Sea ſtill continued open to the Egyptians; but their commercial tranſactions in that country were greatly circumſcribed and obſtructed, by the influence which the Portugueſe had acquired in every port to which they were accuſtomed to reſort.

IN conſequence of this, the Venetians ſoon began to feel that decreaſe of their own Indian trade which they had foreſeen and dreaded. In order to prevent the farther progreſs of this evil, they perſuaded the Soldan of the Mameluks, equally alarmed

[h] Oſorius de reb. geſtis Eman. lib. x. p. 274, &c. Tavernier's Travels, Book v. c. 23.

[i] Oſorius, lib. ix. p. 248, &c.

alarmed with themſelves at the rapid ſucceſs of the Portugueſe in the Eaſt, and no leſs intereſted to hinder them from engroſſing that commerce, which had ſo long been the chief ſource of opulence both to the monarchs and to the people of Egypt, to enter into a negociation with the Pope and the King of Portugal. The tone which the Soldan aſſumed in this negociation was ſuch as became the fierce chief of a military government. After ſtating his excluſive right to the trade with India, he forewarned Julius II. and Emanuel, that, if the Portugueſe did not relinquiſh that new courſe of navigation by which they had penetrated into the Indian ocean, and ceaſe from encroaching on that commerce, which from time immemorial had been carried on between the Eaſt of Aſia and his dominions, he would put to death all the chriſtians in Egypt, Syria, and Paleſtine, burn their churches, and demoliſh the holy ſepulchre itſelf [k]. This formidable threat, which, a few centuries before this period, would have made all Chriſtendom tremble, ſeems to have made ſo little impreſſion, that the Venetians, as the laſt expedient, had recourſe to a meaſure, which, in that age, was deemed not only reprehenſible, but impious. They incited the Soldan to fit out a fleet in the Red Sea, and to attack thoſe unexpected invaders of a gainful monopoly, of which he and his predeceſſors had long enjoyed undiſturbed poſſeſſion. As Egypt did not produce timber proper for building ſhips of force, the Venetians permitted the Soldan to cut it in their foreſts of Dalmatia, whence it was conveyed to Alexandria, and

[k] Oſorius de rebus Eman. lib. iv. p. 110. edit. 1580. Aſia de Barros, decad. i. lib. viii. c. 2.

then

SECT. III. then carried, partly by water and partly by land, to Suez. There twelve ships of war were built, on board of which a body of Mameluks was ordered to serve, under the command of an officer of merit. These new enemies, far more formidable than the natives of India with whom the Portuguese had hitherto contended, they encountered, with undaunted courage, and after some severe conflicts, they entirely ruined the squadron, and remained masters of the Indian ocean[l].

SOON after this disaster, the dominion of the Mameluks was overturned, and Egypt, Syria, and Palestine were subjected to the Turkish empire by the victorious arms of Selim I. Their mutual interest quickly induced the Turks and Venetians to forget ancient animosities, and to co-operate towards the ruin of the Portuguese trade in India. With this view Selim confirmed to the Venetians the extensive commercial privileges which they had enjoyed under the government of the Mameluks, and published an edict permitting the free entry of all the productions of the East, imported directly from Alexandria, into every part of his dominions, and imposing heavy duties upon such as were brought from Lisbon[m].

BUT all these were unavailing efforts against the superior advantages which the Portuguese possessed, in supplying Europe with the commodities of the East, in consequence

[l] Asia de Barros, dec. ii. lib. ii. c. 6. Lafitau, Hist. de Decouvertes des Portugais, i. 292, &c. Osor. lib. iv. p. 120.

[m] Sandi Stor. Civ. Venez. part ii. 901. part iii. 432.

of

of having opened a new mode of communication with it. At the ſame time, the Venetians, brought to the brink of ruin by the fatal league of Cambray, which broke the power and humbled the pride of the republic, were incapable of ſuch efforts for the preſervation of their commerce, as they might have made in the more vigorous age of their government, and were reduced to the feeble expedients of a declining ſtate. Of this there is a remarkable inſtance in an offer made by them to the King of Portugal in the year one thouſand five hundred and twenty-one, to purchaſe, at a ſtipulated price, all the ſpices imported into Liſbon, over and above what might be requiſite for the conſumption of his own ſubjects. If Emanuel had been ſo inconſiderate as to cloſe with this propoſal, Venice would have recovered all the benefit of the gainful monopoly which ſhe had loſt. But the offer met with the reception that it merited, and was rejected without heſitation [a].

The Portugueſe, almoſt without obſtruction, continued their progreſs in the Eaſt, until they eſtabliſhed there a commercial empire; to which, whether we conſider its extent, its opulence, the ſlender power by which it was formed, or the ſplendour with which the government of it was conducted, there had hitherto been nothing comparable in the hiſtory of nations. Emanuel, who laid the foundation of this ſtupendous fabric, had the ſatisfaction to ſee it almoſt completed. Every part of Europe was ſupplied by the Portugueſe with the productions of the Eaſt; and if we except ſome inconſiderable

[a] Oſor. de reb. Eman. lib. xii. 265.

quantity

SECT. III.

quantity of them, which the Venetians ftill continued to receive by the ancient channels of conveyance, our quarter of the globe had no longer any commercial intercourfe with India, and the regions of Afia beyond it, but by the Cape of Good Hope.

THOUGH from this period the people of Europe have continued to carry on their trade with India by fea, yet a confiderable portion of the valuable productions of the Eaft is ftill conveyed to other regions of the earth by land-carriage. In tracing the progrefs of trade with India, this branch of it is an object of confiderable magnitude, which has not been examined with fufficient attention. That the ancients fhould have had recourfe frequently to the tedious and expenfive mode of tranfporting goods by land, will not appear furprifing, when we recollect the imperfect ftate of navigation among them: The reafon of this mode of conveyance being not only continued, but increafed, in modern times, demands fome explanation.

IF we infpect a map of Afia, we cannot fail to obferve, that the communication throughout all the countries of that great continent to the weft of Indoftan and China, though opened in fome degree towards the fouth by the navigable rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and towards the north by two inland feas, the Euxine and Cafpian, muft be carried on in many extenfive provinces wholly by land. This, as I have obferved, was the firft mode of intercourfe between different countries, and during the infancy of navigation it was the

only one. Even after that art had attained ſome degree of improvement, the conveyance of goods by the two rivers which I have mentioned, extended ſo little way into the interior country, and the trade of the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas was ſo often obſtructed by the barbarous nations ſcattered along their ſhores, that, partly on that account, and partly from the adherence of mankind to ancient habits, the commerce of the various provinces of Aſia, particularly that with India and the regions beyond it, continued to be conducted by land.

The ſame circumſtances which induced the inhabitants of Aſia to carry on ſuch a conſiderable part of their commerce with each other in this manner, operated with ſtill more powerful effect in Africa. That vaſt continent, which little reſembles the other diviſions of the earth, is not penetrated by inland ſeas, like Europe and Aſia, or by a chain of lakes, like North America, or opened by rivers (the Nile alone excepted) of extended navigation. It forms one uniform, continuous ſurface, between the various parts of which there could be no intercourſe, from the earlieſt times, but by land. Rude as all the people of Africa are, and ſlender as the progreſs is which they have made in the arts of life, ſuch a communication appears to have been always kept up. How far it extended in the more early periods to which I have directed my reſearches, and by what different routes it was carried on, I have not ſufficient information to determine with accuracy. It is highly probable that, from time immemorial, the gold, the ivory, the perfumes, both of the ſouthern parts of Africa, and of its more northern

SECT. III. diſtricts, were conveyed either to the Arabian Gulf, or to Egypt, and exchanged for the ſpices and other productions of the Eaſt.

The Mahomedan religion, which ſpread with amazing rapidity over all Aſia and a conſiderable part of Africa, contributed greatly towards the increaſe of commercial intercourſe by land in both theſe quarters of the globe, and has given it additional vigour, by mingling with it a new principle of activity, and by directing it to a common centre. Mahomet enjoined all his followers to viſit once in their life-time, the Caaba or ſquare building in the temple of Mecca, the immemorial object of veneration among his countrymen; and, according to their tradition, the firſt ſpot on this earth which was conſecrated to the worſhip of God: In order to preſerve continually upon their minds a ſenſe of their obligation to perform this duty, he directed that, in all the multiplied acts of devotion which his religion preſcribes, true believers ſhould always turn their faces towards that holy place [o]. In obedience to a precept ſolemnly enjoined and ſedulouſly inculcated, numerous caravans of pilgrims aſſemble annually in every country where the Mahomedan faith is eſtabliſhed. From the ſhores of the Atlantic on one hand, and from the moſt remote regions of the Eaſt on the other, the votaries of the Prophet advance to Mecca. Commercial ideas and objects mingle with thoſe of devotion. The numerous camels [p] of each caravan are loaded with thoſe

[o] Herbelot Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Caaba* & *Keblah*. [p] See NOTE LI.

commodities of every country which are of easiest carriage and most ready sale. The holy city is crowded, not only with zealous devotees, but with opulent merchants. During the few days they remain there, the fair of Mecca is the greatest, perhaps, on the face of the earth. Mercantile transactions are carried on in it to an immense value, of which the dispatch, the silence, the mutual confidence and good faith in conducting them, are the most unequivocal proof. The productions and manufactures of India form a capital article in this great traffic, and the caravans, on their return, disseminate them through every part of Asia and Africa. Some of these are deemed necessary, not only to the comfort, but to the preservation of life, and others contribute to its elegance and pleasure. They are so various as to suit the taste of mankind in every climate, and in different stages of improvement; and are in high request among the rude natives of Africa, as well as the more luxurious inhabitants of Asia. In order to supply their several demands, the caravans return loaded with the muslins and chintzes of Bengal and the Deccan, the shawls of Cachemire, the pepper of Malabar, the diamonds of Golconda, the pearls of Kilkare, the cinnamon of Ceylon, the nutmeg cloves and mace of the Moluccas, and an immense number of other Indian commodities.

Beside these great caravans, formed partly by respect for a religious precept, and partly with a view to extend a lucrative branch of commerce, there are other caravans, and these not inconsiderable, composed entirely of merchants, who have no object but trade. These, at stated seasons, set out from different parts

SECT. III.

of the Turkish and Persian dominions, and proceeding to Indostan, and even to China, by routes which were anciently known, they convey by land-carriage the most valuable commodities of these countries to the remote provinces of both empires. It is only by considering the distance to which large quantities of these commodities are carried, and frequently across extensive deserts, which, without the aid of camels, would have been impassable, that we can form any idea of the magnitude of the trade with India by land, and are led to perceive, that in a Disquisition concerning the various modes of conducting this commerce, it is well entitled to the attention which I have bestowed in endeavouring to trace it [q].

[q] See NOTE LII.

AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION IV.

General Obſervations.

THUS I have endeavoured to deſcribe the progreſs of trade with India, both by ſea and by land, from the earlieſt times in which hiſtory affords any authentic information concerning it, until an entire revolution was made in its nature, and the mode of carrying it on, by that great diſcovery which I originally fixed as the utmoſt boundary of my inquiries. Here, then, this Diſquiſition might have been terminated. But as I have conducted my readers to that period when a new order of ideas, and new SECT. IV.

Z

SECT. IV. new arrangements of policy began to be introduced into Europe, in consequence of the value and importance of commerce being so thoroughly understood, that in almost every country the encouragement of it became a chief object of public attention; as we have now reached that point whence a line may be drawn which marks the chief distinction between the manners and political institutions of ancient and modern times, it will render the work more instructive and useful, to conclude it with some general observations, which naturally arise from a survey of both, and a comparison of the one with the other. These observations, I trust, will be found, not only to have an intimate connection with the subject of my researches, and to throw additional light upon it; but will serve to illustrate many particulars in the general history of commerce, and to point out effects or consequences of various events, which have not been generally observed, or considered with that attention which they merited.

I. After viewing the great and extensive effects of finding a new course of navigation to India by the Cape of Good Hope, it may appear surprising to a modern observer, that a discovery of such importance was not made, or even attempted, by any of the commercial states of the ancient world. But in judging with respect to the conduct of nations in remote times, we never err more widely, than when we decide with regard to it, not according to the ideas and views of their age, but of our own. This is not, perhaps, more conspicuous in any instance, than in that under consideration. It was by the Tyrians, and by the Greeks, who were masters of Egypt, that the

the different people of Europe were firſt ſupplied with the productions of the Eaſt. From the account that has been given of the manner in which they procured theſe, it is manifeſt that they had neither the ſame inducements with modern nations to wiſh for any new communication with India, nor the ſame means of accompliſhing it. All the commercial tranſactions of the ancients with the Eaſt were confined to the ports on the Malabar coaſt, or extended at fartheſt to the iſland of Ceylon. To theſe ſtaples, the natives of all the different regions in the eaſtern parts of Aſia brought the commodities which were the growth of their ſeveral countries, or the product of their ingenuity, in their own veſſels, and with them the ſhips from Tyre and from Egypt completed their inveſtments. While the operations of their Indian trade were carried on within a ſphere ſo circumſcribed, the conveyance of a cargo by the Arabian Gulf, notwithſtanding the expence of land-carriage, either from Elath to Rhinocolura, or acroſs the deſart to the Nile, was ſo ſafe and commodious, that the merchants of Tyre and Alexandria had little reaſon to be ſolicitous for the diſcovery of any other. The ſituation of both theſe cities, as well as that of the other conſiderable commercial ſtates of antiquity, was very different from that of the countries to which, in later times, mankind have been indebted for keeping up intercourſe with the remote parts of the globe. Portugal, Spain, England, Holland, which have been moſt active and ſucceſsful in this line of enterpriſe, all lie on the Atlantic ocean, (in which every European voyage of diſcovery muſt commence,) or have immediate acceſs to it. But Tyre was ſituated at the eaſtern extremity of the Mediterranean, Alexandria

SECT. IV. Alexandria not far from it; Rhodes, Athens, Corinth, which came afterwards to be ranked among the moſt active trading cities of antiquity, lay conſiderably advanced towards the ſame quarter in that ſea. The commerce of all theſe ſtates was long confined within the precincts of the Mediterranean; and in ſome of them never extended beyond it. The pillars of Hercules, or the Straits of Gibraltar, were long conſidered as the utmoſt boundary of navigation. To reach this was deemed a ſignal proof of naval ſkill; and before any of theſe ſtates could give a beginning to an attempt towards exploring the vaſt unknown ocean which lay beyond it, they had to accompliſh a voyage (according to their ideas) of great extent and much danger. This was ſufficient to deter them from engaging in an arduous undertaking, from which, even if attended with ſucceſs, their ſituation prevented their entertaining hopes of deriving great advantage [a].

BUT could we ſuppoſe the diſcovery of a new paſſage to India to have become an object of deſire or purſuit to any of theſe ſtates, their ſcience as well as practice of navigation was ſo defective, that it would have been hardly poſſible for them to attain it. The veſſels which the ancients employed in trade were ſo ſmall, as not to afford ſtowage for proviſions ſufficient to ſubſiſt a crew during a long voyage. Their conſtruction was ſuch that they could ſeldom venture to depart far from land, and their mode of ſteering along the coaſt (which I have been obliged to mention often) ſo circuitous and ſlow, that from theſe as well as from other

[a] See NOTE LIII.

circum-

circumstances which I might have specified [b], we may pronounce a voyage from the Mediterranean to India by the Cape of Good Hope, to have been an undertaking beyond their power to accomplish, in such a manner as to render it, in any degree, subservient to commerce. To this decision, the account preserved by Herodotus, of a voyage performed by some Phenician ships employed by a king of Egypt, which, taking their departure from the Arabian Gulf, doubled the Southern promontory of Africa, and arrived, at the end of three years, by the Straits of Gades, or Gibraltar, at the mouth of the Nile [c], can hardly be considered as repugnant; for several writers of the greatest eminence among the ancients, and most distinguished for their proficiency in the knowlege of geography, regarded this account rather as an amusing tale, than the history of a real transaction; and either entertained doubts concerning the possibility of sailing round Africa, or absolutely denied it [d]. But if what Herodotus relates concerning the course held by these Phenician ships had ever been received by the ancients with general assent, we can hardly suppose, that any state could have been so wildly adventurous, as to imagine that a voyage, which it required three years to complete, could be undertaken with a prospect of commercial benefit.

II. The rapid progress of the moderns in exploring India, as well as the extensive power and valuable settlements which

[b] Goguet Orig. des Loix des Arts, &c. ii. 303, 329.

[c] Lib. iv. c. 42.

[d] Polyb. lib. iii. p. 193. edit. Casaub. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 6. Ptol. Geogr. lib. iv. c. 9. See NOTE LIV.

SECT. IV. they early acquired there, mark such a distinction between their mode of conducting naval operations, and that of the ancients, as merits to be considered and explained with attention. From the reign of the first Ptolemy, to the conquest of Egypt by the Mahomedans, Europe had been supplied with the productions of the East by the Greeks of Alexandria, by the Romans while they were masters of Egypt, and by the subjects of the Emperors of Constantinople, when that kingdom became a province of their dominions. During this long period, extending almost to a thousand years, none of those people, the most enlightened, undoubtedly, in the ancient world, ever advanced by sea farther towards the East than the Gulf of Siam, and had no regular established trade but with the ports on the coast of Malabar, or those in the island of Ceylon. They attempted no conquests in any part of India, they made no settlements, they erected no forts. Satisfied with an intercourse merely commercial, they did not aim at acquiring any degree of power or dominion in the countries where they traded, though it seems to be probable that they might have established it without much opposition from the natives, a gentle effeminate people, with whom, at that time, no foreign and more warlike race was mingled. But the enterprizing activity of the Portuguese was not long confined within the same limits; a few years after their arrival at Calecut, they advanced towards the East, into regions unknown to the ancients. The kingdoms of Cambodia, Cochin China, Tonquin, the vast empire of China, and all the fertile islands in the great Indian Archipelago, from Sumatra to the Philippines, were discovered, and

 the

the Portuguefe, though oppofed in every quarter by the Mahomedans of Tartar or Arabian origin fettled in many parts of India, enemies much more formidable than the natives, eftablifhed there that extenfive influence and dominion which I have formerly defcribed. SECT. IV.

Of this remarkable difference between the progrefs and operations of the ancients and moderns in India, the imperfect knowlege of the former, with refpect both to the theory and practice of navigation, feems to have been the principal caufe. From the coaft of Malabar to the Philippines, was a voyage of an extent far beyond any that the ancients were accuftomed to undertake, and, according to their manner of failing, muft have required a great length of time to perform it. The nature of their trade with India was fuch, that they had not (as I have already obferved) the fame inducements with the moderns, to profecute difcovery with ardour; and, according to the defcription given of the veffels in which the merchants of Alexandria carried on their trade from the Arabian Gulf, they appear to have been very unfit for that purpofe. On all thefe accounts, the ancients remained fatisfied with a flender knowlege of India; and influenced by reafons proceeding from the fame caufe, they attempted neither conqueft nor fettlement there. In order to accomplifh either of thefe, they muft have tranfported a confiderable number of men from India. But, from the defective ftructure of their fhips, as well as from the imperfection of their art in

 navigating

navigating them, the ancients ſeldom ventured to convey a body of troops to any diſtance by ſea. From Berenice to Muſiris, was to them, even after Hippalus had diſcovered the method of ſteering a direct courſe, and when their naval ſkill had attained to its higheſt ſtate of improvement, a voyage of no leſs than ſeventy days. By the ancient route along the coaſt of Perſia, a voyage from the Arabian Gulf to any part of India muſt have been of greater length, and accompliſhed more ſlowly. As no hoſtile attack was ever made upon India by ſea, either by the Greek monarchs of Egypt, though the two firſt of them were able and ambitious Princes, or by the moſt enterprizing of the Roman Emperors, it is evident that they muſt have deemed it an attempt beyond their power to execute. Alexander the Great, and, in imitation of him, his ſucceſſors, the monarchs of Syria, were the only perſons in the ancient world who formed an idea of eſtabliſhing their dominion in any part of India; but it was with armies led thither by land, that they hoped to atchieve this.

III. The ſudden effect of opening a direct communication with the Eaſt, in lowering the price of Indian commodities, is a circumſtance that merits obſervation. How compendious ſoever the ancient intercourſe with India may appear to have been, it was attended with conſiderable expence. The productions of the remote parts of Aſia, brought to Ceylon, or the ports on the Malabar coaſt, by the natives, were put on board the ſhips which arrived from the Arabian Gulf. At Berenice they were landed, and carried by camels two hundred

hundred and fifty-eight miles to the banks of the Nile. There they were again embarked, and conveyed down the river to Alexandria, whence they were dispatched to different markets. The addition to the price of goods by such a multiplicity of operations must have been considerable, especially when the rate chargeable on each operation was fixed by monopolists, subject to no controul. But after the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope was discovered, its various commodities were purchased at first hand in the countries of which they were the growth or manufacture. In all these, particularly in Indostan and in China, the subsistence of man is more abundant than in any other part of the earth. The people live chiefly upon rice, the most prolific of all grains. Population, of consequence, is so great, and labour so extremely cheap, that every production of nature or of art is sold at a very low price. When these were shipped in different parts of India, they were conveyed directly to Lisbon, by a navigation, long indeed, but uninterrupted and safe, and thence circulated through Europe. The carriage of mercantile goods by water is so much less expensive than by any other mode of conveyance, that as soon as the Portuguese could import the productions of India in sufficient quantities to supply the demands of Europe, they were able to afford them at such a reduced price, that the competition of the Venetians ceased almost entirely, and the full stream of commerce flowed in its natural direction towards the cheapest market. In what proportion the Portuguese lowered the price of Indian commodities, I cannot ascertain with precision, as I have not found in contemporary writers sufficient information with respect

SECT. IV.

to that point. Some idea, however, of this, approaching perhaps near to accuracy, may be formed, from the computations of Mr. Munn, an intelligent Engliſh merchant. He has publiſhed a table of the prices paid for various articles of goods in India, compared with the prices for which they were ſold in Aleppo, from which the difference appears to be nearly as three to one; and he calculates, that, after a reaſonable allowance for the expence of the voyage from India, the ſame goods may be ſold in England at half the price which they bear in Aleppo. The expence of conveying the productions of India up the Perſian Gulf to Baſſora, and thence either through the Great or Little Deſert to Aleppo, could not, I ſhould imagine, differ conſiderably from that by the Red Sea to Alexandria. We may therefore ſuppoſe, that the Venetians might purchaſe them from the merchants of that city, at nearly the ſame rate for which they were ſold in Aleppo; and when we add to this, what they muſt have charged as their own profit in all the markets which they frequented, it is evident that the Portugueſe might afford to reduce the commodities of the Eaſt to a price below that which I have mentioned, and might ſupply every part of Europe with them more than one-half cheaper than formerly. The enterprizing ſchemes of the Portugueſe monarchs were accompliſhed ſooner, as well as more completely, than in the hour of moſt ſanguine hope they could have preſumed to expect; and early in the ſixteenth century, their ſubjects became poſſeſſed of a monopoly of the trade with India, founded upon the only equitable title, that of furniſhing its productions in greater abundance, and at a more moderate price.

IV. We

IV. We may obferve, that in confequence of a more plentiful fupply of Indian goods, and at a cheaper rate, the demand for them increafed rapidly in every part of Europe. To trace the progrefs of this in detail, would lead me far beyond the period which I have fixed as the limit of this Difquifition, but fome general remarks concerning it will be found intimately connected with the fubject of my inquiries. What were the chief articles of importation from India, while the Romans had the direction of the trade with that country, I have formerly mentioned. But upon the fubverfion of their empire, and the fettlement of the fierce warriors of Scythia and Germany in the various countries of Europe, the ftate of fociety, as well as the condition of individuals, became fo extremely different, that the wants and defires of men were no longer the fame. Barbarians, many of them not far advanced in their progrefs beyond the rudeft ftate of focial life, had little relifh for thofe accommodations, and that elegance, which are fo alluring to polifhed nations. The curious manufactures of filk, the precious ftones and pearls of the Eaft, which had been the ornament and pride of the wealthy and luxurious citizens of Rome, were not objects of defire to men, who, for a confiderable time after they took poffeffion of their new conquefts, retained the original fimplicity of their paftoral manners. They advanced, however, from rudenefs to refinement in the ufual courfe of progreffion which nations are deftined to hold, and an increafe of wants and defires requiring new objects to gratify them, they began to acquire a relifh for fome of the luxuries of India. Among thefe they had a fingular predilection for the fpiceries and aromatics which

SECT. IV.

which that country yields in ſuch variety and abundance. Whence their peculiar fondneſs for theſe aroſe, it is not of importance to inquire. Whoever peruſes the writers of the middle ages, will find many particulars which confirm this obſervation. In every enumeration of Indian commodities which they give, ſpices are always mentioned as the moſt conſiderable and precious article [e]. In their cookery, all diſhes were highly ſeaſoned with them. In every entertainment of parade, a profuſion of them was deemed eſſential to magnificence. In every medical preſcription they were principal ingredients [f]. But conſiderable as the demand for ſpices had become, the mode in which the nations of Europe had hitherto been ſupplied with them was extremely diſadvantageous. The ſhips employed by the merchants of Alexandria never ventured to viſit thoſe remote regions which produce the moſt valuable ſpices, and before they could be circulated through Europe, they were loaded with the accumulated profits received by four or five different hands through which they had paſſed. But the Portugueſe, with a bolder ſpirit of navigation, having penetrated into every part of Aſia, took in their cargo of ſpices in the places where they grew, and could afford to diſpoſe of them at ſuch a price; that, from being an expenſive luxury, they became an article of ſuch general uſe, as greatly augmented the demand for them. An effect ſimilar to this may

[e] Jac. de Vitriac. Hiſt. Hieroſ. ap. Bongars, i. p. 1099. Wilh. Tyr. lib. xii. c. 23.

[f] Du Cange, Gloſſar. Verb. *Aromata*, *Species*. Henry's Hiſt. of G. Brit. vol. iv. p. 597, 598.

be

be obferved, with refpect to the demand for other commodities imported from India, upon the reduction of their price by the Portuguefe. From that period a growing tafte for Afiatic luxuries may be traced in every country of Europe, and the number of fhips fitted out for that trade at Lifbon, continued to increafe every year [a].

V. Lucrative as the trade with India was, and had long been deemed, it is remarkable that the Portuguefe were fuffered to remain in the undifturbed and exclufive poffeffion of it, during the courfe of almoft a century. In the ancient world, though Alexandria, from the peculiar felicity of its fituation, could carry on an intercourfe with the Eaft by fea, and circulate its productions through Europe with fuch advantage, as gave it a decided fuperiority over every rival; yet various attempts (which I have defcribed in their proper places) were made, from time to time, to obtain fome fhare in a commerce fo apparently beneficial. From the growing activity of the commercial fpirit in the fixteenth century, as well as from the example of the eager folicitude with which the Venetians and Genoefe exerted themfelves alternately to fhut out each other from any fhare in the Indian trade, it might have been expected that fome competitor would have arifen to call in queftion the claim of the Portuguefe to an exclufive right of traffic with the Eaft, and to wreft from them fome portion of it. There were, however, at that time, fome peculiar circumftances in the political ftate of all thofe nations in Europe,

[a] See NOTE LV.

SECT. IV. whofe intrufion, as rivals, the Portuguefe had any reafon to dread, which fecured to them the quiet enjoyment of their monopoly of Indian commerce, during fuch a long period. From the acceffion of Charles V. to the throne, Spain was either fo much occupied in a multiplicity of operations in which it was engaged by the ambition of that monarch, and of his fon Philip II. or fo intent on profecuting its own difcoveries and conquefts in the New World, that, although, by A.D. 1521. the fuccefsful enterprize of Magellan, its fleets were unexpectedly conducted by a new courfe to that remote region of Afia which was the feat of the moft gainful and alluring branch of trade carried on by the Portuguefe, it could make no confiderable effort to avail itfelf of the commercial advantages which it might have derived from that event. By the acquifition of the crown of Portugal, in the year one thoufand five hundred and eighty, the kings of Spain, inftead of the rivals, became the protectors of the Portuguefe trade, and the guardians of all its extenfive rights. Throughout the fixteenth century, the ftrength and refources of France were fo much wafted by the fruitlefs expeditions of their monarchs into Italy, by their unequal conteft with the power and policy of Charles V. and by the calamities of the civil wars which defolated the kingdom upwards of forty years, that it could neither beftow much attention upon objects of commerce, nor engage in any fcheme of diftant enterprize. The Venetians, how fenfibly foever they might feel the mortifying reverfe of being excluded, almoft entirely, from the Indian trade, of which their capital had been formerly the chief feat, were fo debilitated and humbled by the League of Cambray, that they were no longer capable

capable of engaging in any undertaking of magnitude. England, weakened (as I formerly obſerved) by the long conteſt between the houſes of York and Lancaſter, and juſt beginning to recover its proper vigour, was reſtrained from active exertion, during one part of the ſixteenth century, by the cautious maxims of Henry VII. and waſted its ſtrength, during another part of it, by engaging inconſiderately in the wars between the princes on the continent. The nation, though deſtined to acquire territories in India more extenſive and valuable than were ever poſſeſſed by any European power, had no ſuch preſentiment of its future eminence there, as to take an early part in the commerce or tranſactions of that country, and a great part of the century elapſed before it began to turn its attention towards the Eaſt.

SECT. IV.

WHILE the moſt conſiderable nations in Europe found it neceſſary, from the circumſtances which I have mentioned, to remain inactive ſpectators of what paſſed in the Eaſt, the Seven United Provinces of the Low Countries, recently formed into a ſmall ſtate, ſtill ſtruggling for political exiſtence, and yet in the infancy of its power, ventured to appear in the Indian ocean as the rivals of the Portugueſe; and, deſpiſing their pretenſions to an excluſive right of commerce with the extenſive countries to the eaſtward of the Cape of Good Hope, invaded that monopoly which they had hitherto guarded with ſuch jealous attention. The Engliſh ſoon followed the example of the Dutch, and both nations, at firſt by the enterprizing induſtry of private adventurers, and afterwards by the more powerful efforts of trading companies, under the protection of

 public

public authority, advanced with aſtoniſhing ardour and ſucceſs in this new career opened to them. The vaſt fabric of power which the Portugueſe had erected in the Eaſt (a ſuperſtructure much too large for the baſis on which it had to reſt) was almoſt entirely overturned, in as ſhort time, and with as much facility, as it had been raiſed. England and Holland, by driving them from their moſt valuable ſettlements, and ſeizing the moſt lucrative branches of their trade, have attained to that pre-eminence in naval power and commercial opulence, by which they are diſtinguiſhed among the nations of Europe.

VI. The co-incidence, in point of time, of the diſcoveries made by Columbus in the Weſt, and thoſe of Gama in the Eaſt, is a ſingular circumſtance, which merits obſervation, on account of the remarkable influence of thoſe events in forming or ſtrengthening the commercial connection of the different quarters of the globe with each other. In all ages, gold and ſilver, particularly the latter, have been the commodities exported with the greateſt profit to India. In no part of the earth do the natives depend ſo little upon foreign countries, either for the neceſſaries or luxuries of life. The bleſſings of a favourable climate and fertile ſoil, augmented by their own ingenuity, afford them whatever they deſire. In conſequence of this, trade with them has always been carried on in one uniform manner, and the precious metals have been given in exchange for their peculiar productions, whether of nature or art. But when the communication with India was rendered ſo much more eaſy, that the demand for its commodities began to increaſe far beyond what had been formerly known, if Europe

Europe had not been ſupplied with the gold and ſilver which it was neceſſary to carry to the markets of the Eaſt from ſources richer and more abundant than her own barren and impoveriſhed mines, ſhe muſt either have abandoned the trade with India altogether, or have continued it with manifeſt diſadvantage. By ſuch a continual drain of gold and ſilver, as well as by the unavoidable waſte of both in circulation and in manufactures, the quantity of thoſe metals muſt have gone on diminiſhing, and their value would have been ſo much enhanced, that they could not have continued long to be of the ſame utility in the commercial tranſactions between the two countries. But before the effects of this diminution could be very ſenſibly felt, America opened her mines, and poured in treaſures upon Europe in the moſt copious ſtream to which mankind ever had acceſs. This treaſure, in ſpite of innumerable anxious precautions to prevent it, flowed to the markets where the commodities neceſſary for ſupplying the wants, or gratifying the luxury of the Spaniards, were to be found; and from that time to the preſent, the Engliſh and Dutch have purchaſed the productions of China and Indoſtan, with ſilver brought from the mines of Mexico and Peru. The immenſe exportation of ſilver to the Eaſt, during the courſe of two centuries, has not only been replaced by the continual influx from America, but the quantity of it has been conſiderably augmented, and at the ſame time the proportional rate of its value in Europe and in India has varied ſo little, that it is chiefly with ſilver that many of the capital articles imported from the Eaſt are ſtill purchaſed.

While America contributed in this manner to facilitate and extend the intercourſe of Europe with Aſia, it gave riſe to a traffic

SECT. IV. traffic with Africa, which, from ſlender beginnings, has become ſo conſiderable, as to form the chief bond of commercial connection with that continent. Soon after the Portugueſe had extended their diſcoveries on the coaſt of Africa beyond the river Senegal, they endeavoured to derive ſome benefit from their new ſettlements there, by the ſale of ſlaves. Various circumſtances combined in favouring the revival of this odious traffic. In every part of America, of which the Spaniards took poſſeſſion, they found that the natives, from the feebleneſs of their frame, from their indolence, or from the injudicious manner of treating them, were incapable of the exertions requiſite either for working mines, or for cultivating the earth. Eager to find hands more induſtrious and efficient, the Spaniards had recourſe to their neighbours the Portugueſe, and purchaſed from them negroe ſlaves. Experience ſoon diſcovered, that they were men of a more hardy race, and ſo much better fitted for enduring fatigue, that the labour of one negroe was computed to be equal to that of four Americans[b]; and from that time the number employed in the New World has gone on increaſing with rapid progreſs. In this practice, no leſs repugnant to the feelings of humanity than to the principles of religion, the Spaniards have unhappily been imitated by all the nations of Europe, who have acquired territories in the warmer climates of the New World. At preſent the number of negroe ſlaves in the ſettlements of Great Britain and France in the Weſt Indies, exceeds a million; and as the eſtabliſhment of ſervitude has been found, both in ancient and in modern times, extremely unfavourable to population, it re-

[b] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 320.

quires

quires an annual importation from Africa of at leaſt fifty-eight thouſand, to keep up the ſtock[1]. If it were poſſible to aſcertain, with equal exactneſs, the number of ſlaves in the Spaniſh dominions, and in North America, the total number of negroe ſlaves might be well reckoned at as many more.

THUS the commercial genius of Europe, which has given it a viſible aſcendent over the three other diviſions of the earth, by diſcerning their reſpective wants and reſources, and by rendering them reciprocally ſubſervient to one another, has eſtabliſhed an union among them, from which it has derived an immenſe increaſe of opulence, of power, and of enjoyments.

VII. THOUGH the diſcovery of a New World in the Weſt, and the opening of a more eaſy and direct communication with the remote regions of the Eaſt, co-operated towards extending the commerce, and adding to the enjoyments, of Europe, a remarkable difference may be obſerved, with reſpect both to the time and the manner in which they produced theſe effects. When the Portugueſe firſt viſited the different countries of Aſia, ſtretching from the coaſt of Malabar to China, they found them poſſeſſed by nations highly civilized, which had made conſiderable progreſs in elegant as well as uſeful arts, which were accuſtomed to intercourſe with ſtrangers, and well acquainted with all the advantages of commerce. But when the Spaniards began to explore the New World which they

[1] Report of Lords of the Privy Council, A. D. 1788.

SECT. IV. discovered, the aspect which it presented to them was very different. The islands were inhabited by naked savages, so unacquainted with the simplest and most necessary arts of life, that they subsisted chiefly on the spontaneous productions of a fertile soil and genial climate. The continent appeared to be a forest of immense extent, along the coast of which were scattered some feeble tribes, not greatly superior to the islanders in industry or improvement. Even its two large monarchies, which have been dignified with the appellation of civilized states, had not advanced so far beyond their countrymen, as to be entitled to that name. The inhabitants, both of Mexico and Peru, unacquainted with the useful metals, and destitute of the address requisite for acquiring such command of the inferior animals as to derive any aid from their labour, had made so little progress in agriculture, the first of all arts, that one of the greatest difficulties with which the small number of Spaniards, who overturned those empires which have been so highly extolled, had to struggle, was how to procure in them what was sufficient for their subsistence.

It was of consequence, with a very different spirit, that the intercourse with two countries, resembling each other so little in their degree of improvement, was begun and carried on. The Portuguese, certain of finding in the East, not only the productions with which the bountiful hand of Nature has enriched that part of the globe, but various manufactures which had long been known and admired in Europe, engaged in this alluring trade with the greatest eagerness. The encouragement of it their monarchs considered as a chief object of government, towards which they directed all the power of the

3 kingdom,

kingdom, and rouzed their ſubjects to ſuch vigorous exertions in the proſecution of it, as occaſioned that aſtoniſhing rapidity of progreſs which I have deſcribed. The ſanguine hopes with which the Spaniards entered upon their career of diſcovery, met not with the ſame ſpeedy gratification. From the induſtry of the rude inhabitants of the New World, they did not receive a ſingle article of commerce. Even the natural productions of the ſoil and climate, when not cheriſhed and multiplied by the foſtering and active hand of man, were of little account. Hope, rather than ſucceſs, incited them to perſiſt in extending their reſearches and conqueſts; and as government derived little immediate benefit from theſe, it left the proſecution of them chiefly to private adventurers, by whoſe enterprizing activity, more than by any effort of the ſtate, the moſt valuable poſſeſſions of Spain in America were acquired. Inſtead of the inſtantaneous and great advantages which the Portugueſe derived from their diſcoveries, above half a century elapſed before the Spaniards reaped any benefit of conſequence from their conqueſts, except the ſmall quantities of gold which the iſlanders were compelled to collect, and the plunder of the gold and ſilver employed by the Mexicans and Peruvians as ornaments of their perſons and temples, or as utenſils of ſacred or domeſtic uſe. It was not until the diſcovery of the mines of Potoſi in Peru, in the year one thouſand five hundred and forty-five, and of thoſe of Sacotecas in Mexico, ſoon after, that the Spaniſh territories in the New World brought a permanent and valuable addition of wealth and revenue to the mother country.

SECT. IV.

Nor did the trade with India differ more from that with America, in reſpect of the particular circumſtance which I have explained, than in reſpect to the manner of carrying it on, after it grew to be a conſiderable object of political attention. Trade with the Eaſt was a ſimple mercantile tranſaction, confined to the purchaſe either of the natural productions of the country, ſuch as ſpices, precious ſtones, pearls, &c. or of the manufactures which abounded among an induſtrious race of men, ſuch as ſilk and cotton ſtuffs, porcelane, &c. Nothing more was requiſite in conducting this trade, than to ſettle a few ſkilful agents in proper places, to prepare a proper aſſortment of goods for completing the cargoes of ſhips as ſoon as they arrived from Europe, or at the utmoſt to acquire the command of a few fortified ſtations, which might ſecure them admiſſion into ports where they might careen in ſafety, and find protection from the inſults of any hoſtile power. There was no neceſſity of making any attempt to eſtabliſh colonies, either for the cultivation of the ſoil, or the conduct of manufactures. Both theſe remained, as formerly, in the hands of the natives.

But as ſoon as that wild ſpirit of enterprize, which animated the Spaniards who firſt explored and ſubdued the New World, began to ſubſide, and when, inſtead of roving as adventurers from province to province in queſt of gold and ſilver, they ſeriouſly turned their thoughts towards rendering their conqueſts beneficial by cultivation and induſtry, they found it neceſſary to eſtabliſh colonies in every country which they wiſhed to improve. Other nations imitated their example

in

in the ſettlements which they afterwards made in ſome of the iſlands, and on the continent of North America. Europe, after having deſolated the New World, began to repeople it, and under a ſyſtem of colonization (the ſpirit and regulations of which it is not the object of this Diſquiſition to explain) the European race has multiplied there amazingly. Every article of commerce imported from the New World, if we except the furs and ſkins purchaſed from the independent tribes of hunters in North America, and from a few tribes in a ſimilar ſtate on the Southern continent, is the produce of the induſtry of Europeans ſettled there. To their exertions, or to thoſe of hands which they have taught or compelled to labour, we are indebted for ſugar, rum, cotton, tobacco, indigo, rice, and even the gold and ſilver extracted from the bowels of the earth. Intent on thoſe lucrative branches of induſtry, the inhabitants of the New World pay little attention to thoſe kinds of labour which occupy a conſiderable part of the members of other ſocieties, and depend, in ſome meaſure, for their ſubſiſtence, and entirely for every article of elegance and luxury, upon the ancient continent. Thus the Europeans have become manufacturers for America, and their induſtry has been greatly augmented by the vaſt demands for ſupplying the wants of extenſive countries, the population of which is continually increaſing. Nor is the influence of this demand confined ſolely to the nations which have a more immediate connection with the American colonies; it is felt in every part of Europe that furniſhes any article exported to them, and gives activity and vigour to the hand of the artiſan in the inland provinces of Germany, as well as to thoſe in Great

SECT. IV.

SECT. IV. Britain and other countries, which carry on a direct trade with the New World.

But while the discovery and conquest of America is allowed to be one principal cause of that rapid increase of industry and wealth, which is conspicuous in Europe during the two last centuries, some timid theorists have maintained, that throughout the same period Europe has been gradually impoverished, by being drained of its treasure, in order to carry on its trade with India. But this apprehension has arisen from inattention to the nature and use of the precious metals. They are to be considered in two different lights; either as the signs which all civilized nations have agreed to employ, in order to estimate or represent the value both of labour and of all commodities, and thus to facilitate the purchase of the former, and the conveyance of the latter from one proprietor to another; or gold and silver may be viewed as being themselves commodities or articles of commerce, for which some equivalent must be given by such as wish to acquire them. In this light, the exportation of the precious metals to the East should be regarded; for, as the nation by which they are exported must purchase them with the produce of its own labour and ingenuity, this trade must contribute, though not in the same obvious and direct manner as that with America, towards augmenting the general industry and opulence of Europe. If England, as the price of Mexican and Peruvian dollars which are necessary for carrying on its trade with India, must give a certain quantity of its woollen or cotton cloth or hard-ware, then the hands of an additional number of manufacturers are

rendered active, and work to a certain amount muſt be executed, for which, without this trade, there would not have been any demand. The nation reaps all the benefit ariſing from a new creation of induſtry. With the gold and ſilver which her manufactures have purchaſed in the Weſt, ſhe is enabled to trade in the markets of the Eaſt, and the exportation of treaſure to India, which has been ſo much dreaded, inſtead of impoveriſhing, enriches the kingdom.

VIII. It is to the diſcovery of the paſſage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and to the vigour and ſucceſs with which the Portugueſe proſecuted their conqueſts and eſtabliſhed their dominion there, that Europe has been indebted for its preſervation from the moſt illiberal and humiliating ſervitude that ever oppreſſed poliſhed nations. For this obſervation I am indebted to an Author, whoſe ingenuity has illuſtrated, and whoſe eloquence has adorned the Hiſtory of the Settlements and Commerce of Modern Nations in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies[1]; and it appears to me ſo well founded as to merit more ample inveſtigation. A few years after the firſt appearance of the Portugueſe in India, the dominion of the Mameluks was overturned by the irreſiſtible power of the Turkiſh arms, and Egypt and Syria were annexed as provinces to their empire. If after this event the commercial intercourſe with India had continued to be carried on in its ancient channels, the Turkiſh Sultans, by being maſters of Egypt and Syria, muſt have poſſeſſed the abſolute command of it, whether the

[1] M. L'Abbé Raynal.

produc-

SECT. IV. productions of the East were conveyed by the Red Sea to Alexandria, or were transported by land-carriage from the Persian Gulf to Constantinople, and the ports of the Mediterranean. The monarchs who were then at the head of this great empire, were neither destitute of abilities to perceive the pre-eminence to which this would have elevated them, nor of ambition to aspire to it. Selim, the conqueror of the Mameluks, by confirming the ancient privileges of the Venetians in Egypt and Syria, and by his regulations concerning the duties on Indian goods, which I have already mentioned, early discovered his solicitude to secure all the advantages of commerce with the East to his own dominions. The attention of Solyman the Magnificent, his successor, seems to have been equally directed towards the same object. More enlightened than any monarch of the Ottoman race, he attended to all the transactions of the European states, and had observed the power as well as opulence to which the republic of Venice had attained by engrossing the commerce with the East. He now beheld Portugal rising towards the same elevation, by the same means. Eager to imitate and to supplant them, he formed a scheme suitable to his character for political wisdom and the appellation of *Institutor of Rules*, by which the Turkish Historians have distinguished him, and established, early in his reign, a system of commercial laws in his dominions, by which he hoped to render Constantinople the great staple of Indian trade, as it had been in the prosperous ages of the Greek empire[k]. For

[k] Paruta Hist. Venet. lib. vii. p. 589. Sandi Stor. Civil. Venez. part ii. p. 901.

accom-

accomplifhing this fcheme, however, he did not rely on the operation of laws alone; he fitted out about the fame time a formidable fleet in the Red Sea, under the conduct of a confidential officer, with fuch a body of janizaries on board of it, as he deemed fufficient not only to drive the Portuguefe out of all their new fettlements in India, but to take poffeffion of fome commodious ftation in that country, and to erect his ftandard there. The Portuguefe, by efforts of valour and conftancy, entitled to the fplendid fuccefs with which they were crowned, repulfed this powerful armament in every enterprize it undertook, and compelled the fhattered remains of the Turkifh fleet and army to return with ignominy to the harbours from which they had taken their departure, with the moft fanguine hopes of terminating the expedition in a very different manner[1]. Solyman, though he never relinquifhed the defign of expelling the Portuguefe from India, and of acquiring fome eftablifhment there, was fo occupied during the remainder of his reign, by the multiplicity of arduous operations in which an infatiable ambition involved him, that he never had leifure to refume the profecution of it with vigour.

A.C. 1538.

If either the meafures of Selim had produced the effect which he expected, or if the more adventurous and extenfive plan of Solyman had been carried into execution, the command of the wealth of India, together with fuch a marine as the monopoly of trade with that country has, in every age, enabled the power which poffeffed it to create and maintain, muft have brought

[1] Afia de Barros, dec. iv. lib. x. c. 1, &c.

SECT. IV.

an acceſſion of force to an empire already formidable to mankind, that would have rendered it altogether irreſiſtible. Europe, at that period, was not in a condition to have defended itſelf againſt the combined exertions of ſuch naval and military power, ſupported by commercial wealth, and under the direction of a monarch whoſe comprehenſive genius was able to derive from each its peculiar advantages, and to employ all with the greateſt effect. Happily for the human race, the deſpotic ſyſtem of Turkiſh government, founded on ſuch illiberal fanaticiſm as has extinguiſhed ſcience in Egypt, in Aſſyria, and in Greece, its three favourite manſions in ancient times, was prevented from extending its dominion over Europe, and from ſuppreſſing liberty, learning, and taſte, when beginning to make ſucceſsful efforts to revive there, and again to bleſs, to enlighten, and to poliſh mankind.

NOTES

NOTES

AND

ILLUSTRATIONS.

NOTES

AND

ILLUSTRATIONS.

NOTE I. SECT. I. p. 6.

CREDULITY and fcepticifm are two oppofite extremes into which men are apt to run, in examining the events which are faid to have happened in the early ages of antiquity. Without incurring any fufpicion of a propenfity to the latter of thefe, I may be allowed to entertain doubts concerning the expedition of Sefoftris into India, and his conqueft of that country.——1. Few facts in ancient hiftory feem to be better eftablifhed, than that of the early averfion of the Egyptians to a fea-faring life. Even the power of defpotifm cannot at once change the ideas and manners of a nation, efpecially when they have been confirmed by long habit, and rendered facred by the fanction of religion. That Sefoftris, in the courfe of a few years, fhould have fo

 entirely

entirely overcome the prejudices of a superstitious people, as to be able to fit out four hundred ships of force in the Arabian Gulf, besides another fleet which he had in the Mediterranean, appears to be extremely improbable. Armaments of such magnitude would require the utmost efforts of a great and long established maritime power.——2. It is remarkable that Herodotus, who enquired with the most persevering diligence into the ancient history of Egypt, and who received all the information concerning it which the priests of Memphis, Heliopolis, and Thebes, could communicate, Herodot. edit. Wesselingij, lib. ii. c. 3. although he relates the history of Sesostris at some length, does not mention his conquest of India. Lib. ii. c. 102, &c. That tale, it is probable, was invented in the period between the age of Herodotus and that of Diodorus Siculus, from whom we receive a particular detail of the Indian expedition of Sesostris. His account rests entirely upon the authority of the Egyptian priests; and Diodorus himself not only gives it as his general opinion, "that many things which "they related, flowed rather from a desire to promote the "honour of their country, than from attention to truth," lib. i. p. 34. edit. Wesselingij, Amst. 1746; but takes particular notice that the Egyptian priests, as well as the Greek writers, differ widely from one another in the accounts which they give of the actions of Sesostris, lib. i. p. 62.——3. Though Diodorus asserts, that in relating the history of Sesostris he had studied to select what appeared to him most probable, and most agreeable to the monuments of that monarch still remaining in Egypt, he has admitted into his narrative many marvellous circumstances which render the whole extremely suspicious.

suspicious. The father of Sesostris, as he relates, collected all the male children who were born in Egypt on the same day with his son, in order that they might be educated, together with him, conformable to a mode which he prescribed, with a view of preparing them as proper instruments to carry into execution the great undertakings for which he destined Sesostris. Accordingly, when Sesostris set out upon his Indian expedition, which, from circumstances mentioned by Diodorus, must have been about the fortieth year of his age, one thousand seven hundred of his youthful associates are said to have been still alive, and were entrusted with high command in his army. But if we apply to the examination of this story the certain principles of political arithmetic, it is evident, that if one thousand seven hundred of the male children born on the same day with Sesostris were alive when his great expedition commenced, the number of children born in Egypt on each day of the year must have been at least ten thousand, and the population of the kingdom must have exceeded sixty millions; Goguet l'Origine des Loix, des Arts, &c. tom. ii. p. 12, &c. A number far beyond the bounds of credibility, in a kingdom which, from the accurate calculations of M. D'Anville, Memoire sur l'Egypte Anc. et Moderne, p. 23, &c. does not contain more than two thousand one hundred square leagues of habitable country. Another marvellous particular is the description of a ship of cedar, four hundred and ninety feet in length, covered on the outside with gold, and on the inside with silver, which Sesostris consecrated to the deity who was the chief object of worship at Thebes. Lib. i. p. 67. Such too is the account he gives of the Egyptian army, in

in which, beſide ſix hundred thouſand infantry, and twenty-four thouſand cavalry, there were twenty-ſeven thouſand armed chariots. Ibid. p. 64.——4. Theſe and other particulars appeared ſo far to exceed the bounds of probability, that the ſound underſtanding of Strabo the geographer rejected, without heſitation, the accounts of the Indian expedition of Seſoſtris; and he not only aſſerts, in the moſt explicit terms, that this monarch never entered India, lib. xv. p. 1007. C. edit. Caſaub. Amſt. 1707; but he ranks what has been related concerning his operations in that country, with the fabulous exploits of Bacchus and Hercules, p. 1007. D. 1009. B. The philoſophical Hiſtorian of Alexander the Great ſeems to have entertained the ſame ſentiments with reſpect to the exploits of Seſoſtris in India. Hiſt. Ind. c. 5. Arrian, Exped. Alex. edit. Gronov. L. Bat. 1704.—What ſlender information concerning India, or its inhabitants, Herodotus had received, ſeems to have been derived, not from the Egyptians, but from the Perſians, lib. iii. c. 105, which renders it probable, that in his time there was little intercourſe between Egypt and India.

NOTE II. Sect. I. p. 8.

When we conſider the extent and effects of the Phenician commerce, the ſcanty information concerning it which we receive from ancient writers muſt, on a firſt view, appear ſurpriſing. But when we recollect that all the Greek Hiſtorians, (Herodotus excepted,) who give any account of the Phenicians, publiſhed their works long after the deſtruction of

Tyre by Alexander the Great, we ſhall ceaſe to wonder at their not having entered into minute details with reſpect to a trade which was then removed to new ſeats, and carried on in other channels. But the power and opulence of Tyre, in the proſperous age of its commerce, muſt have attracted general attention. In the prophecies of Ezekiel, who flouriſhed two hundred and ſixty years before the fall of Tyre, there is the moſt particular account of the nature and variety of its commercial tranſactions that is to be found in any ancient writer, and which conveys, at the ſame time, a magnificent idea of the extenſive power of that ſtate. Ch. xxvi, xxvii, xxviii.

NOTE III. Sect. I. p. 11.

The account given of the revenue of the Perſian monarchy by Herodotus is curious, and ſeems to have been copied from ſome public record, which had been communicated to him. According to it, the Perſian empire was divided into twenty Satrapy's, or governments. The tribute levied from each is ſpecified, amounting in all to 14,560 Eubæan talents, which Dr. Arbuthnot reckons to be equal to 2,807,437 l. ſterling money; a ſum extremely ſmall for the revenue of the Great King, and which ill accords with many facts concerning the riches, magnificence, and luxury of the Eaſt, that occur in ancient authors.

NOTE IV. Sect. I. p. 16.

It is ſurpriſing that Alexander did not receive, in the provinces contiguous to India, ſuch an account of the periodical rains in that country, as to ſhew him the impropriety of carrying on military operations there, while theſe continued. His expedition into India commenced towards the end of Spring, Arrian, lib. iv. c. 22., when the rains were already begun in the mountains from which all the rivers in the Panjab flow, and of courſe they muſt have been conſiderably ſwelled before he arrived on their banks. Rennell, p. 268.—He paſſed the Hydaſpes at Midſummer, about the height of the rainy ſeaſon. In a country through which ſo many large rivers run, an army on ſervice at this time of the year muſt have ſuffered greatly. An accurate deſcription of the nature of the rains and inundations in this part of India, is given by Arrian, lib. v. c. 9.; and one ſtill fuller may be found in Strabo, lib. xv. 1013.—It was of what they ſuffered by theſe that Alexander's ſoldiers complained, Strabo, lib. xv. 1021. D.; and not without reaſon, as it had rained inceſſantly during ſeventy days, Diod. Sicul. xvii. c. 94.—A circumſtance which marks the accuracy with which Alexander's officers had attended to every thing in that part of India, deſerves notice. Ariſtobulus, in his Journal, which I have mentioned, takes notice that, though heavy rains fell in the mountains, and in the country near to them, in the plains

below not ſo much as a ſhower fell. Strabo, lib. xv. 1013. B. 1015. B. Major Rennell was informed by a perſon of character, who had reſided in this diſtrict of India, which is now ſeldom viſited by Europeans, that during great part of the S. W. monſoon, or at leaſt in the months of July, Auguſt, and part of September, which is the rainy ſeaſon in moſt other parts of India, the atmoſphere in the Delta of the Indus is generally clouded, but no rain falls, except very near the ſea. Indeed, very few ſhowers fall during the whole ſeaſon. Captain Hamilton relates, that when he viſited Tatta, no rain had fallen for three years before. Memoirs, p. 288.—Tamerlane, who, by the vicinity of the ſeat of his government to India, had the means of being well nformed concerning the nature of the country, avoided the error of Alexander, and made his Indian campaign during the dry ſeaſon. As Nadir Shah, both when he invaded India, A. D. 1738, and in his return next year, marched through the ſame countries with Alexander, and nearly in the ſame line of direction, nothing can give a more ſtriking idea of the perſevering ardour of the Macedonian conqueror, than the deſcription of the difficulties which Nadir Shah had to ſurmount, and the hardſhips which his army endured. Though poſſeſſed of abſolute power and immenſe wealth, and diſtinguiſhed no leſs by great talents than long experience in the conduct of war, he had the mortification to loſe a great part of his troops in croſſing the rivers of the Panjab, in penetrating through the mountains to the north of India, and in conflicts with the fierce natives inhabiting the countries which ſtretch from the banks of the Oxus to the frontiers of Perſia. An

interesting account of his retreat and sufferings is given in the Memoirs of Khojeh Abdulkurreem, a Cashmerian of distinction, who served in his army.

NOTE V. Sect. I. p. 18.

That a fleet so numerous should have been collected in such a short time, is apt to appear, at first sight, incredible. Arrian, however, assures us, that in specifying this number, he followed Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, whose authority he considered to be of the greatest weight, lib. vi. c. 3. But as the Panjab country is full of navigable rivers, on which all the intercourse among the natives was carried on, it abounded with vessels ready constructed to the conqueror's hands, so that he might easily collect that number. If we could give credit to the account of the invasion of India by Semiramis, no fewer than four thousand vessels were assembled in the Indus to oppose her fleet. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. c. 74.—It is remarkable that when Mahmoud of Gaznah invaded India, a fleet was collected on the Indus to oppose him, consisting of the same number of vessels. We learn from the Ayeen Akbery, that the inhabitants of this part of India still continue to carry on all their communication with each other by water; the inhabitants of the Circar of Tatta alone have not less than forty thousand vessels of various constructions. Vol. ii. p. 143.

NOTE

NOTE VI. Sect. I. p. 19.

All these particulars are taken from the Indian History of Arrian, a work different from that already mentioned, and one of the most curious treatises transmitted to us from antiquity. The first part of it consists of extracts from the account given by Nearchus of the climate and soil of India, and the manners of the natives. The second contains that officer's journal of his voyage from the mouth of the Indus to the bottom of the Persian Gulf. The perusal of it gives rise to several observations.——1. It is remarkable that neither Nearchus nor Ptolemy, nor Aristobulus, nor even Arrian, once mention the voyage of Scylax. This could not proceed from their being unacquainted with it, for Herodotus was a favourite author in the hands of every Greek who had any pretensions to literature. It was probably occasioned by the reasons which they had to distrust the veracity of Scylax, of which I have already taken notice. Accordingly, in a speech which Arrian puts into the mouth of Alexander, he asserts that, except Bacchus, he was the first who had passed the Indus; which implies, that he disbelieved what is related concerning Scylax, and was not acquainted with what Darius Hystaspes is said to have done in order to subject that part of India to the Persian crown. Arrian, vii. c. 10. This opinion is confirmed by Megasthenes, who resided a considerable time in India. He asserts that, except Bacchus and Hercules, (to whose fabulous expeditions Strabo is astonished that he should have given any credit,

lib. xv. p. 1007. D.) Alexander was the firſt who had invaded India; Arrian, Hiſt. Indic. c. 5. We are informed by Arrian, that the Aſſacani, and other people who poſſeſſed that country, which is now called the kingdom of Candahar, paid tribute, firſt to the Aſſyrians, and afterwards to the Medes and Perſians; Hiſt. Indic. c. 1. As all the fertile provinces on the north-weſt of the Indus were anciently reckoned to be part of India, it is probable that what was levied from them is the ſum mentioned in the tribute-roll, from which Herodotus drew his account of the annual revenue of the Perſian empire, and that none of the provinces to the ſouth of the Indus were ever ſubject to the kings of Perſia.——2. This voyage of Nearchus affords ſome ſtriking inſtances of the imperfect knowledge which the ancients had of any navigation different from that to which they were accuſtomed in the Mediterranean. Though the enterpriſing genius and enlarged views of Alexander prompted him to attempt opening an intercourſe by ſea between India and his Perſian dominions, yet both he and Nearchus knew ſo little of the ocean which they wiſhed to explore, as to be apprehenſive that it might be found impoſſible to navigate it, on account of impervious ſtraits, or other obſtacles. Hiſt. Indic. c. 20. Q. Curt. lib. ix. c. 9. When the fleet arrived near the mouth of the Indus, the aſtoniſhment excited by the extraordinary flow and ebb of tide in the Indian ocean, a phenomenon (according to Arrian) with which Alexander and his ſoldiers were unacquainted, lib. vi. c. 19. is another proof of their ignorance in maritime ſcience. Nor is there any reaſon to be ſurpriſed at their aſtoniſhment, as the tides are hardly perceptible in the Mediterranean, beyond which the knowledge

knowledge of the Greeks and Macedonians did not extend. For the ſame reaſon, when the Romans carried their victorious arms into the countries ſituated on the Atlantic Ocean, or on the ſeas that communicate with it, this new phenomenon of the tides was an object of wonder and terror to them. Cæſar deſcribes the amazement of his ſoldiers at a ſpring-tide, which greatly damaged the fleet with which he invaded Britain, and acknowledges that it was an appearance with which they were unacquainted; Bell. Gallic. lib. iv. c. 29. The tides on the coaſt near the mouth of the Indus are remarkably high, and the effects of them very great, eſpecially that ſudden and abrupt influx of the tide into the mouths of rivers or narrow ſtraits which is known in India by the name of *The Bore*, and is accurately deſcribed by Major Rennell, Introd. xxiv. Mem. 278. In the Periplus Maris Erythræi, p. 26., theſe high tides are mentioned, and the deſcription of them nearly reſembles that of the Bore. A very exaggerated account of the tides in the Indian ocean is given by Pliny, Nat. Hiſt. lib. xiii. c. 25. Major Rennell ſeems to think, that Alexander and his followers could not be ſo entirely unacquainted with the phenomenon of the tides, as Herodotus had informed the Greeks, "that in the "Red Sea there was a regular ebb and flow of the tide every "day;" lib. ii. c. 11. This is all the explanation of that phenomenon given by Herodotus. But among the ancients there occur inſtances of inattention to facts, related by reſpectable authors, which appear ſurpriſing in modern times. Though Herodotus, as I have juſt now obſerved, gave an account of the voyage performed by Scylax at conſiderable length, neither Alexander, nor his Hiſtorians, take any notice of that event.

I ſhall

I ſhall afterwards have occaſion to mention a more remarkable inſtance of the inattention of later writers to an accurate deſcription which Herodotus had given of the Caſpian Sea. From theſe, and other ſimilar inſtances which might have been produced, we may conclude, that the ſlight mention of the regular flow and ebb of tide in the Red Sea, is not a ſufficient reaſon for rejecting, as incredible, Arrian's account of the ſurpriſe of Alexander's ſoldiers when they firſt beheld the extraordinary effects of the tide at the mouth of the Indus.—— 3. The courſe of Nearchus's voyage, the promontories, the creeks, the rivers, the cities, the mountains, which came ſucceſſively in his view, are ſo clearly deſcribed, and the diſtances of ſuch as were moſt worthy of notice are ſo diſtinctly marked, that M. D'Anville, by comparing theſe with the actual poſition of the country, according to the beſt accounts of it, ancient as well as modern, has been able to point out moſt of the places which Nearchus mentions, with a degree of certainty which does as much honour to the veracity of the Grecian navigator, as to the induſtry, learning, and penetration of the French geographer. Mem. de Literat. tom. xxx. p. 132, &c.

In modern times, the Red Sea is a name appropriated to the Arabian Gulf, but the ancients denominated the ocean which ſtretches from that Gulf to India, the Erythræan Sea, from king Erythras, of whom nothing more is known than the name, which in the Greek language ſignifies red. From this caſual meaning of the word, it came to be believed, that it was of a different colour from other ſeas, and conſequently of more dangerous navigation.

NOTE VII. SECT. I. p. 24.

ALEXANDER was ſo intent on rendering this union of his ſubjects complete, that after his death there was found in his tablets or commentaries, (among other magnificent ſchemes which he meditated) a reſolution to build ſeveral new cities, ſome in Aſia, and ſome in Europe, and to people thoſe in Aſia with Europeans, and thoſe in Europe with Aſiatics, "that, "(ſays the Hiſtorian) by intermarriages, and exchange of "good offices, the inhabitants of theſe two great continents "might be gradually moulded into a ſimilarity of ſentiments, "and become attached to each other with mutual affection." Diod. Sicul. lib. xviii. c. 4.

NOTE VIII. SECT. I. p. 26.

IT ſeems to be an opinion generally received, that Alexander built only two cities in India, Nicæa and Bucephalia, ſituated on the Hydaſpes, the modern Chelum, and that Craterus ſuperintended the building of both. But it is evident, from Arrian, lib. v. c. ult., that he built a third city on the Aceſines, now the Jenaub, under the direction of Hephæſtion; and if it was his object to retain the command of the country, a place of ſtrength on ſome of the rivers to the ſouth of the Hydaſpes ſeems to have been neceſſary for that purpoſe. This part of India has been ſo little viſited in modern times, that it is impoſſible

to point out with precifion the fituation of thefe cities. If P. Tieffenthaler were well founded in his conjecture, that the river now called Rauvee is the Acefines of Arrian, Bernouilli, vol. i. p. 39., it is probable that this city was built fomewhere near Lahore, one of the moft important ftations in that part of India, and reckoned in the Ayeen Akbery to be a city of very high antiquity. But Major Rennell, in my opinion, gives good reafons for fuppofing the Jenaub to be the Acefines of the ancients.

NOTE IX. SECT. I. p. 26.

THE religious fcruples which prevented the Perfians from making any voyage by fea, were known to the ancients. Pliny relates of one of the Magi, who was fent on an embaffy from Tiridates to the emperor Nero, "Navigare noluerat, "quoniam exfpuere in Maria, alijfque mortalium neceffitati-"bus violare naturam eam, fas non putant;" Nat. Hift. lib. xxx. c. 2. This averfion to the fea they carried fo far, that, according to the obfervation of a well-informed Hiftorian, there was not a city of any note in their empire built upon the fea-coaft; Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxiii. c. 6. We learn from Dr. Hyde, how intimately thefe ideas were connected with the doctrines of Zoroafter; Rel. Vet. Perf. cap. vi. In all the wars of the Perfians with Greece, the fleets of the Great King confifted entirely of fhips furnifhed by the Phenicians, Syrians, the conquered provinces of the Leffer Afia, and the iflands adjacent. Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus mention the

the quota furnifhed by each country, in order to compofe the fleet of twelve hundred fhips with which Xerxes invaded Greece, and among thefe there is not one belonging to Perfia. At the fame time it is proper to obferve, that according to Herodotus, whofe authority is unexceptionable with regard to this point, the fleet was under the command of Ariabigines, a fon of Darius, who had feveral fatraps of high rank under his command, and both Perfians and Medes ferved as foldiers on board of it; Herod. lib. vii. c. 96, 97. By what motives, or what authority, they were induced to act in this manner, I cannot explain. From fome religious fcruples, fimilar to thofe of the Perfians, many of the natives of Indoftan, in our own time, refufe to embark on board a fhip, and to ferve at fea; and yet, on fome occafions, the fepoys in the fervice of the European powers have got the better of thefe fcruples.

NOTE X. Sect. I. p. 27.

M. le Baron de Sainte-Croix, in his ingenious and learned Critique des Hiftoriens d'Alexandre le Grand, p. 96, feems to entertain fome doubt with refpect to the number of the cities which Alexander is faid to have built. Plutarch de Fort. Alex. affirms, that he founded no fewer than feventy. It appears from many paffages in ancient authors, that the building of cities, or, what may be confidered as the fame, the eftablifhment of fortified ftations, was the mode of maintaining their authority in the conquered nations, adopted not only by Alexander, but by his fucceffors. Seleucus and Antiochus,

to whom the greater part of the Perſian empire became ſubject, were no leſs remarkable for founding new cities than Alexander, and theſe cities ſeem fully to have anſwered the purpoſes of the founders, as they effectually prevented (as I ſhall afterwards have occaſion to obſerve) the revolt of the conquered provinces. Though the Greeks, animated with the love of liberty and of their native country, refuſed to ſettle in the Perſian empire while under the dominion of its native monarchs, even when allured by the proſpect of great advantage, as M. de Sainte-Croix remarks, the caſe became perfectly different, when that empire was ſubjected to their own dominion, and they ſettled there, not as ſubjects, but as maſters. Both Alexander and his ſucceſſors diſcovered much diſcernment in chuſing the ſituation of the cities which they built. Seleucia, which Seleucus founded, was inferior only to Alexandria in number of inhabitants, in wealth, and in importance; Mr. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 250. M. D'Anville, Mem. de Literat. xxx.

NOTE XI. SECT. I. p. 29.

It is from Juſtin we receive the ſlender knowledge we have of the progreſs which Seleucus made in India; lib. xv. c. 4. But we cannot rely on his evidence, unleſs when it is confirmed by the teſtimony of other authors. Plutarch ſeems to aſſert, that Seleucus had penetrated far into India; but that reſpectable writer is more eminent for his diſcernment of characters, and his happy ſelection of thoſe circumſtances which mark and diſcriminate them, than for the accuracy of his hiſtorical re-

 ſearches.

fearches. Pliny, whofe authority is of greater weight, feems to confider it as certain, that Seleucus had carried his arms into diftricts of India which Alexander never vifited; Plin. Nat. Hift. lib. vi. c. 17. The paffage in which this is mentioned, is fomewhat obfcure, but it feems to imply, that Seleucus had marched from the Hyphafis to the Hyfudrus, from thence to Palibothra, and from that to the mouth of the Ganges. The diftances of the principal ftations in this march are marked, amounting to 2244 Roman miles. In this fenfe, M. Bayer underftands the words of Pliny; Hiftor. Regni Græcorum Bactriani, p. 37. But to me it appears highly improbable, that the Indian expedition of Seleucus could have continued fo long as to allow time for operations of fuch extent. If Seleucus had advanced as far into India as the mouth of the Ganges, the ancients would have had a more accurate knowledge of that part of the country than they feem ever to have poffeffed.

NOTE XII. Sect. I. p. 30.

Major Rennell gives a magnificent idea of this, by informing us, that the Ganges, after it has "efcaped from the "mountainous tract in which it had wandered above eight "hundred miles;" Mem. p. 233. "receives in its courfe "through the plains eleven rivers, fome of them as large as "the Rhine, and none fmaller than the Thames, befides as "many more of leffer note;" p. 257.

NOTE XIII. Sect. I. p. 31.

In fixing the poſition of Palibothra, I have ventured to differ from Major Rennell, and I venture to do ſo with diffidence. According to Strabo, Palibothra was ſituated at the junction of the Ganges and another river; lib. xv. p. 1028. A. Arrian is ſtill more explicit. He places Palibothra at the confluence of the Ganges and Erranaboas, the laſt of which he deſcribes as leſs than the Ganges or Indus, but greater than any other known river; Hiſt. Ind. c. 10. This deſcription of its ſituation correſponds exactly with that of Allahabad. P. Boudier, to whoſe obſervations the geography of India is much indebted, ſays, that the Jumna, at its junction with the Ganges, appeared to him not inferior in magnitude to that river; D'Anville, Antiq. de l' Inde, p. 53. Allahabad is the name which was given to that city by the emperor Akbar, who erected a ſtrong fortreſs there; an elegant delineation of which is publiſhed by Mr. Hodges, No. IV. of his Select Views in India. Its ancient name, by which it is ſtill known among the Hindoos, is *Praeg*, or *Piyag*, and the people of the diſtrict are called *Praegi*, which bears a near reſemblance to Praſij, the ancient appellation of the kingdom of which Palibothra was the capital; P. Tieſſenthaler chez Bernouilli, tom. i. 223. D'Anville, p. 56. Allahabad is ſuch a noted ſeat of Hindoo devotion, that it is denominated *The King of Worſhipped Places*; Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 35. "The territory around

" it, to the extent of forty miles, is deemed holy ground. " The Hindoos believe, that when a man dies in this place, " whatever he wishes for he will obtain in his next regenera- " tion. Although they teach that suicide in general will be " punished with torments hereafter, yet they consider it as " meritorious for a man to kill himself at Allahabad;" Ayeen Akbery, iii. 256. P. Tieffenthaler describes the various objects of veneration at Allahabad, which are still visited with great veneration by an immense number of pilgrims; Bernouilli, tom. i. 224. From all these circumstances, we may conclude it to be a place of great antiquity, and in the same situation with the Palibothra of antiquity.

Major Rennell has been induced to place Palibothra on the same site with Patna, chiefly by two considerations.—— 1. From having learned that on or near the site of Patna stood anciently a very large city named *Patelpoot-her* or *Pataliputra*, which nearly resembles the ancient name of Palibothra. Although there is not now a confluence of two rivers at Patna, he was informed that the junction of the Soane with the Ganges, now twenty-two miles above Patna, was formerly under the walls of that city. The rivers of India sometimes change their course in a singular manner, and he produces some remarkable instances of it. But even should it be allowed, that the accounts which the natives give of this variation in the course of the Soane were perfectly accurate, I question whether Arrian's account of the magnitude of the Erranaboas be applicable to that river, certainly not so justly as to the Jumna.

Jumna.——2. He ſeems to have been influenced, in ſome degree, by Pliny's Itinerary, or Table of Diſtances from Taxila (the modern Attock) to the mouth of the Ganges; Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17. But the diſtances in that Itinerary are marked ſo inaccurately, and in ſome inſtances are ſo palpably erroneous, that one cannot found upon them with much ſecurity. According to it, Palibothra is ſituated four hundred and twenty-five miles below the confluence of the Jumna and Ganges. The actual diſtance, however, between Allahabad and Patna, is not more than two hundred Britiſh miles. A diſagreement ſo conſiderable cannot be accounted for, without ſuppoſing ſome extraordinary error in the Itinerary, or that the point of conflux of the Jumna with the Ganges has undergone a change. For the former of theſe ſuppoſitions there is no authority (as far as I know) from any manuſcript, or for the latter from any tradition. Major Rennell has produced the reaſons which led him to ſuppoſe the ſite of Palibothra to be the ſame with that of Patna; Memoirs, p. 49—54. Some of the objections which might be made to this ſuppoſition he has foreſeen, and endeavoured to obviate; and after all that I have added to them, I ſhall not be ſurpriſed, if, in a geographical diſcuſſion, my readers are diſpoſed to prefer his deciſion to mine.

NOTE

NOTE XIV. SECT. I. p. 32.

I DO not mention a ſhort inroad into India by Antiochus the Great, about one hundred and ninety-ſeven years poſterior to the invaſion of his anceſtor Seleucus. We know nothing more of this tranſaction, than that the Syrian monarch, after finiſhing the war he carried on againſt the two revolted provinces of Parthia and Bactria, entered India, and concluding a peace with Sophagaſenus, a king of the country, received from him a number of elephants, and a ſum of money; Polyb. lib. x. p. 597, &c. lib. xi. p. 651. edit. Caſaub. Juſtin. lib. xv. c. 4. Bayer's Hiſt. Regn. Græcor. Bactr. p. 69, &c.

NOTE XV. SECT. I. p. 34.

A FACT curſorily related by Strabo, and which has eſcaped the inquiſitive induſtry of M. de Guignes, coincides remarkably with the narrative of the Chineſe writers, and confirms it. The Greeks, he ſays, were deprived of Bactria by tribes or hordes of Scythian Nomades, who came from the country beyond the Jaxartes, and are known by the names of Aſij, Paſiani, Tachari, and Sacarauli; Strab. lib. xi. p. 779. A. The Nomades of the ancients were nations who, like the Tartars, ſubſiſted entirely, or almoſt entirely, as ſhepherds, without agriculture.

NOTE

NOTE XVI. Sect. I. p. 36.

As the diſtance of Arſinoe, the modern Suez, from the Nile, is conſiderably leſs than that between Berenice and Coptos, it was by this route that all the commodities imported into the Arabian Gulf, might have been conveyed with moſt expedition and leaſt expence into Egypt. But the navigation of the Arabian Gulf, which even in the preſent improved ſtate of nautical ſcience is ſlow and difficult, was in ancient times conſidered by the nations around it to be ſo extremely perilous, that it led them to give ſuch names to ſeveral of its promontories, bays, and harbours, as convey a ſtriking idea of the impreſſion which the dread of this danger had made upon their imagination. The entry into the Gulf they called *Babelmandeb*, the gate or port of affliction. To a harbour not far diſtant, they gave the name of *Mete*, i. e. Death. A headland adjacent they called *Gardefan*, the Cape of Burial. Other denominations of ſimilar import are mentioned by the author to whom I am indebted for this information. Bruce's Travels, vol. i. p. 442, &c. It is not ſurpriſing then, that the ſtaple of Indian trade ſhould have been transferred from the northern extremity of the Arabian Gulf to Berenice, as by this change a dangerous navigation was greatly ſhortened. This ſeems to have been the chief reaſon that induced Ptolemy to eſtabliſh the port of communication with India at Berenice, as there were other harbours on the Arabian Gulf which were conſiderably nearer than it to the Nile. At a later period, after the

the ruin of Coptos by the Emperor Diocletian, we are informed by Abulfeda, Defcript. Egypt. edit. Michaelis, p. 77, that Indian commodities were conveyed from the Red Sea to the Nile, by the fhorteft route, viz. from Cofleir, probably the Philoteras Portus of Ptolemy, to Cous, the Vicus Apollinis, a journey of four days. The fame account of the diftance was given by the natives to Dr. Pococke, Travels, vol. i. p. 87. In confequence of this, Cous, from a fmall village, became the city in upper Egypt next in magnitude to Foftat, or Old Cairo. In procefs of time, from caufes which I cannot explain, the trade from the Red Sea by Cofleir removed to Kene, farther down the river than Cous, Abulf. p. 13. 77. D'Anville Egypte, 196—200. In modern times, all the commodities of India imported into Egypt, are either brought by fea from Gidda to Suez, and thence carried on camels to Cairo, or are conveyed by land carriage by the caravan returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca, Niebuhr Voyage, tom. i. p. 224. Volney, i. 188, &c. This, as far as I have been able to trace it, is a complete account of all the different routes by which the productions of the Eaft have been conveyed to the Nile, from the firft opening of that communication. It is fingular that P. Sicard, Mem. des Miffions dans le Levant, tom. ii. p. 157, and fome other refpectable writers, fhould fuppofe Cofleir to be the Berenice founded by Ptolemy, although Ptolemy has laid down its latitude at 23° 50′, and Strabo has defcribed it as nearly under the fame parallel with that of Syenè, lib. ii. p. 195, D. In confequence of this miftake, Pliny's computation of the diftance between Berenice and Coptos, at two hundred and fifty-eight miles, has been deemed erroneous. Pococke, p. 87. But as Pliny not

only mentions the total diftance, but names the different ftations in the journey, and fpecifies the number of miles between each; and as the Itinerary of Antoninus coincides exactly with his account, D'Anville Egypte, p. 21, there is no reafon to call in queftion the accuracy of it.

NOTE XVII. SECT. I. p. 37.

MAJOR RENNELL is of opinion, "that under the Ptolemies, the Egyptians extended their navigation to the extreme point of the Indian continent, and even failed up the Ganges to Palibothra," now Patna. Introd. p. xxxvi. But had it been ufual to fail up the Ganges as high as Patna, the interior parts of India muft have been better known to the ancients than they ever were, and they would not have continued to derive their information concerning them from Megafthenes alone. Strabo begins his defcription of India in a very remarkable manner. He requefts his readers to perufe with indulgence the account which he gives of it, as it was a country very remote, and few perfons had vifited it; and of thefe, many having feen only a fmall part of the country, related things either from hear-fay, or, at the beft, what they had haftily remarked while they paffed through it in the courfe of military fervice, or on a journey. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1005. B. He takes notice that few of the traders from the Arabian Gulf ever reached the Ganges. Ibid. 1006. C. He afferts, that the Ganges enters the

the ſea by one mouth, ibid. 1011. C.; an error into which he could not have fallen if the navigation of that river had been common in his time. He mentions indeed the ſailing up the Ganges, ibid. 1010, but it is curſorily in a ſingle ſentence; whereas, if ſuch a conſiderable inland voyage of above four hundred miles, through a populous and rich country, had been cuſtomary, or even if it had ever been performed by the Roman, or Greek, or Egyptian traders, it muſt have merited a particular deſcription, and muſt have been mentioned by Pliny and other writers, as there was nothing ſimilar to it in the practice of navigation among the ancients. It is obſerved by Arrian (or whoever is the author of the Periplus Maris Erythræi), that previous to the diſcovery of a new route to India, which ſhall be mentioned afterwards, the commerce with that country was carried on in ſmall veſſels which ſailed round every bay, p. 32. Ap. Hudſ. Geogr. Min. Veſſels of ſuch light conſtruction, and which followed this mode of ſailing, were ill fitted for a voyage ſo diſtant as that round Cape Comorin, and up the bay of Bengal, to Patna. It is not improbable, that the merchants whom Strabo mentions as having reached the Ganges, may have travelled thither by land, either from the countries towards the mouth of the Indus, or from ſome part of the Malabar coaſt, and that the navigation up the Ganges, of which he caſually takes notice, was performed by the natives in veſſels of the country. This opinion derives ſome confirmation from his remarks upon the bad ſtructure of the veſſels which frequented that part of the Indian ocean. From his deſcription of them, p. 1012. C. it is evident that they were veſſels of the country.

NOTE XVIII. Sect. I. p. 39.

The erroneous ideas of many intelligent writers of antiquity with reſpect to the Caſpian Sea, though well known to every man of letters, are ſo remarkable, and afford ſuch a ſtriking example of the imperfection of their geographical knowledge, that a more full account of them may not only be acceptable to ſome of my readers, but in endeavouring to trace the various routes by which the commodities of the Eaſt were conveyed to the nations of Europe, it becomes neceſſary to enter into ſome detail concerning their various ſentiments with reſpect to this matter. 1. According to Strabo, the Caſpian is a bay, that communicates with the great Northern ocean, from which it iſſues at firſt, by a narrow ſtrait, and then expands into a ſea extending in breadth five hundred ſtadia, lib. xi. p. 773. A. With him Pomponius Mela agrees, and deſcribes the ſtrait by which the Caſpian is connected with the ocean, as of conſiderable length, and ſo narrow that it had the appearance of a river, lib. iii. c. 5. edit. Pliny likewiſe gives a ſimilar deſcription of it, Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 13. In the age of Juſtinian, this opinion concerning the communication of the Caſpian Sea with the ocean, was ſtill prevalent; Coſm. Indicopl. Topog. Chriſt. lib. ii. p. 138. C. 2. Some early writers, by a miſtake ſtill more ſingular, have ſuppoſed the Caſpian Sea to be connected with the Euxine. Quintus Curtius, whoſe ignorance of geography is notorious, has adopted this error, lib. vii. c. 7. edit. 3. Arrian, though a much more judicious

judicious writer, and who by reſiding for ſome time in the Roman province of Cappadocia, of which he was governor, might have obtained more accurate information, declares in one place, the origin of the Caſpian Sea to be ſtill unknown, and is doubtful whether it was connected with the Euxine, or with the great Eaſtern ocean which ſurrounds India; lib. vii. c. 16. In another place he aſſerts, that there was a communication between the Caſpian and the Eaſtern ocean; lib. v. c. 26. Theſe errors appear more extraordinary, as a juſt deſcription had been given of the Caſpian by Herodotus, near five hundred years before the age of Strabo. "The Caſpian, ſays he, is a ſea by itſelf, unconnected with any other. Its length is as much as a veſſel with oars can ſail in fifteen days, its greateſt breadth as much as it can ſail in eight days;" lib. i. c. 203. Ariſtotle deſcribes it in the ſame manner, and with his uſual preciſion contends that it ought to be called a great lake not a ſea; Meteorolog. lib. ii. Diodorus Siculus concurs with them in opinion, vol. ii. lib. xviii. p. 261. None of thoſe authors determine whether the greateſt length of the Caſpian was from North to South, or from Eaſt to Weſt. In the ancient maps which illuſtrate the geography of Ptolemy, it is delineated, as if its greateſt length extended from Eaſt to Weſt. In modern times the firſt information concerning the true form of the Caſpian which the people of Europe received, was given by Anthony Jenkinſon, an Engliſh merchant, who with a caravan from Ruſſia travelled along a conſiderable part of its coaſt in the year 1558; Hakluyt Collect. vol. i. p. 334. The accuracy of Jenkinſon's deſcription was confirmed by an actual ſurvey of that ſea made by order of Peter the Great,

A. D. 1718, and it is now aſcertained not only that the Caſpian is unconnected with any other ſea, but that its length from North to South is conſiderably more than its greateſt breadth from Eaſt to Weſt. From this detail, however, we learn how the ill-founded ideas concerning it, which were generally adopted, gave riſe to various wild ſchemes of conveying Indian commodities to Europe by means of its ſuppoſed communication with the Euxine ſea, or with the Northern ocean. It is an additional proof of the attention of Alexander the Great to every thing conducive to the improvement of commerce, that a ſhort time before his death he gave directions to fit out a ſquadron in the Caſpian, in order to ſurvey that ſea, and to diſcover whether it was connected either with the Euxine or Indian ocean; Arrian. lib. vii. c. 16.

NOTE XIX. Sect. I. p. 49.

From this curious detail, we learn how imperfect ancient navigation was, even in its moſt improved ſtate. The voyage from Berenice to Ocelis, could not have taken thirty days, if any other courſe had been held than that of ſervilely following the windings of the coaſt. The voyage from Ocelis to Muſiris would be (according to Major Rennell) fifteen days run for an European ſhip in the modern ſtile of navigation, being about ſeventeen hundred and fifty marine miles, on a ſtreight courſe; Introd. p. xxxvii. It is remarkable, that though the Periplus Maris Erythræi was written after the voyage of Hippalus, the chief object of the author of it is to deſcribe the

the ancient courſe along the coaſts of Arabia and Perſia, to the mouth of the Indus, and from thence down the weſtern ſhore of the continent to Muſiris. I can account for this, only by ſuppoſing, that from the unwillingneſs of mankind to abandon old habits, the greater part of the traders from Berenice ſtill continued to follow that route to which they were accuſtomed. To go from Alexandria to Muſiris, required (according to Pliny) ninety-four days. In the year 1788, the Boddam, a ſhip belonging to the Engliſh Eaſt-India Company, of a thouſand tuns burthen, took only fourteen days more to complete her voyage from Portſmouth to Madras. Such are the improvements which have been made in navigation.

NOTE XX. SECT. II. p. 50.

IT was the opinion of Plato, that in a well-regulated commonwealth the citizens ſhould not engage in commerce, nor the ſtate aim at obtaining maritime power. Commerce, he contends, would corrupt the purity of their morals, and by entering into the ſea-ſervice, they would be accuſtomed to find pretexts for juſtifying conduct ſo inconſiſtent with what was manly and becoming, as would gradually relax the ſtrictneſs of military diſcipline. It had been better for the Athenians, he aſſerts, to have continued to ſend annually the ſons of ſeven of their principal citizens to be devoured by the Minotaur, than to have changed their ancient manners, and to have become a maritime power. In that perfect republic, of which he delineates the form, he ordains that the capital ſhould be ſituated at leaſt

ten miles from the ſea; De Legibus, lib. iv. ab initio. Theſe ideas of Plato were adopted by other philoſophers. Ariſtotle enters into a formal diſcuſſion of the queſtion, whether a State rightly conſtituted ſhould be commercial or not; and though abundantly diſpoſed to eſpouſe ſentiments oppoſite to thoſe of Plato, he does not venture to decide explicitly with reſpect to it; De Repub. lib. vii. c. 6. In ages when ſuch opinions prevail, little information concerning commerce can be expected.

NOTE XXI. Sect. II. p. 53.

Pliny, lib. ix. c. 35. Principium ergo culmenque omnium rerum prætij Margaritæ tenent. In lib. xxxvii. c. 4. he affirms, Maximum in rebus humanis prætium, non ſolum inter gemmas, habet Adamas. Theſe two paſſages ſtand in ſuch direct contradiction to one another, that it is impoſſible to reconcile them, or to determine which is moſt comformable to truth. I have adhered to the former, becauſe we have many inſtances of the exorbitant price of pearls, but none, as far as I know, of diamonds having been purchaſed at a rate ſo high. In this opinion I am confirmed by a paſſage in Pliny, lib. xix. c. 1.; having mentioned the exorbitant price of *Aſbeſtos*, he ſays, " æquat prætia excellentium Margaritarum;" which implies, that he conſidered them to be of higher price than any other commodity.

NOTE XXII. SECT. II. p. 54.

PLINY has devoted two entire books of his Natural Hiſtory, lib. xii. and xiii. to the enumeration and deſcription of the ſpices, aromatics, ointments, and perfumes, the uſe of which luxury had introduced among his countrymen. As many of theſe were the productions of India, or of the countries beyond it, and as the trade with the Eaſt was carried on to a great extent in the age of Pliny, we may form ſome idea of the immenſe demand for them, from the high price at which they continued to be ſold in Rome. To compare the prices of the ſame commodities in ancient Rome, with thoſe now paid in our own country, is not a gratification of curioſity merely, but affords a ſtandard by which we may eſtimate the different degree of ſucceſs with which the Indian trade has been conducted in ancient and modern times. Many remarkable paſſages in ancient authors, concerning the extravagant price of precious ſtones and pearls among the Romans, as well as the general uſe of them by perſons of all ranks, are collected by Meurſius de Lux. Romanorum, cap. 5.; and by Staniſlaus Robierzyckius, in his treatiſe on the ſame ſubject, lib. ii. c. 1. The Engliſh reader will receive ſufficient information from Dr. Arbuthnot, in his valuable Tables of ancient coins, weights, and meaſures, p. 172, &c.

NOTE XXIII. Sect. II. p. 56.

M. Mahudel, in a memoir read in the academy of inſcriptions and belles lettres in the year 1719, has collected the various opinions of the ancients concerning the nature and origin of ſilk, which tend all to prove their ignorance with regard to it. Since the publication of M. Mahudel's memoir, P. du Halde has deſcribed a ſpecies of ſilk, of which I believe he communicated the firſt notice to the moderns. "This is produced by ſmall inſects nearly reſembling ſnails. They do not form cocoons either round or oval like the ſilk-worm, but ſpin very long threads, which faſten themſelves to trees and buſhes as they are driven by the wind. Theſe are gathered, and wrought into ſilk ſtuffs, coarſer than thoſe produced by domeſtic ſilk-worms. The inſects who produce this coarſe ſilk are wild." Deſcription de l'Empire de la Chine, tom. ii. folio, p. 207. This nearly reſembles Virgil's deſcription,

> Velleraque ut foliis depectant tenuia Seres.
>
> Georg. II. 121.

An attentive reader of Virgil will find, that, beſides all the other qualities of a great deſcriptive poet, he poſſeſſed an extenſive knowledge of natural hiſtory. The nature and productions of the wild ſilk-worms are illuſtrated at greater length in the large collection of Memoires concernant l'Hiſtoire, les Sciences, les Arts, &c. des Chinois, tom. ii. p. 575, &c.; and by Pere de Mailla, in his voluminous Hiſtory of China, tom. xiii. p. 434. It is a ſingular circumſtance in the hiſtory of ſilk, that

on account of its being an excretion of a worm, the Mahomedans confider it as an unclean drefs; and it has been decided, with the unanimous affent of all the doctors, that a perfon wearing a garment made entirely of filk, cannot lawfully offer up the daily prayers enjoined by the Koran. Herbel. Bibl. Orient. artic. *Harir*.

NOTE XXIV. Sect. II. p. 57.

If the ufe of the cotton manufactures of India had been common among the Romans, the various kinds of them would have been enumerated in the Law de Publicanis et Vectigalibus, in the fame manner as the different kinds of fpices and precious ftones. Such a fpecification would have been equally neceffary for the direction both of the merchant and of the tax-gatherer.

NOTE XXV. Sect. II. p. 57.

This part of Arrian's Periplus has been examined with great accuracy and learning by Lieutenant Wilford; and from his inveftigation it is evident, that the Plithana of Arrian is the modern Pultanah, on the fouthern banks of the river Godvery, two hundred and feventeen Britifh miles fouth from Baroach; that the pofition of Tagara is the fame with that of the modern Dowlatabad, and the high grounds acrofs which the goods were conveyed to Baroach, are the Ballagaut mountains. The bearings and diftances of thefe different

 places,

places, as ſpecified by Arrian, afford an additional proof (were that neceſſary) of the exact information which he had received concerning this diſtrict of India; Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. i. p. 369, &c.

NOTE XXVI. SECT. II. p. 64.

STRABO acknowledges his neglect of the improvements in geography which Hipparchus had deduced from aſtronomical obſervations, and juſtifies it by one of thoſe logical ſubtleties which the ancients were apt to introduce into all their writings. "A geographer," ſays he, (i. e. a deſcriber of the earth) "is "to pay no attention to what is out of the earth; nor will "men, engaged in conducting the affairs of that part of the "earth which is inhabited, deem the diſtinction and diviſions "of Hipparchus worthy of notice." Lib. ii. 194. C.

NOTE XXVII. SECT. II. p. 64.

WHAT an high opinion the ancients had of Ptolemy, we learn from Agathemerus, who flouriſhed not long after him. "Ptolemy," ſays he, "who reduced geography into a regular "ſyſtem, treats of every thing relating to it, not careleſsly, "or merely according to ideas of his own; but attending to "what had been delivered by more ancient authors, he adopted "from them whatever he found conſonant to truth." Epitome Geogr.

Geogr. lib. i. c. 6. edit. Hudſon. From the ſame admiration of his work, Agathodæmon, an artiſt of Alexandria, prepared a ſeries of maps for the illuſtration of it, in which the poſition of all the places mentioned by Ptolemy, with their longitude and latitude, is laid down preciſely according to his ideas. Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. iii. 412.

NOTE XXVIII. Sect. II. p. 65.

As theſe public Surveys and Itineraries furniſhed the ancient geographers with the beſt information concerning the poſition and diſtances of many places, it may be proper to point out the manner in which they were completed by the Romans. The idea of a general ſurvey of the whole empire was firſt formed by Julius Cæſar, and, having been begun by him under authority of a decree of the ſenate, was finiſhed by Auguſtus. As Rome was ſtill far inferior to Greece in ſcience, the execution of this great undertaking was committed to three Greeks, men of great abilities, and ſkilled in every part of philoſophy. The ſurvey of the eaſtern diviſion of the empire was finiſhed by Zenodoxus in fourteen years five months and nine days. That of the northern diviſion was finiſhed by Theodotus in twenty years eight months and ten days. The ſouthern diviſion was finiſhed in twenty-five years one month and ten days. Æthici Coſmographia apud Geographos, editos à Hen. Stephano, 1577. p. 107. This was an undertaking worthy of thoſe illuſtrious perſons, and ſuited to the magnificence of a great people. Beſides this general ſurvey, every new war produced

duced a new delineation and meaſurement of the countries which were the ſeat of it. We may conclude from Vegetius, Inſtit. Rei Militaris, lib. iii. c. 6., that every governor of a Roman province was furniſhed with a deſcription of it; in which were ſpecified the diſtance of places in miles, the nature of the roads, the bye-roads, the ſhort cuts, the mountains, the rivers, &c.; all theſe, ſays he, were not only deſcribed in words, but were delineated in a map, that, in deliberating concerning his military movements, the eyes of a general might aid the deciſions of his mind.

NOTE XXIX. Sect. II. p. 66.

The conſequence of this miſtake is remarkable. Ptolemy, lib. vii. c. 1., computes the longitude of Barygaza, or Baroach, to be 17° 20′; and that of Cory, or Cape Comorin, to be 13° 20′. which is the difference of four degrees preciſely; whereas the real difference between theſe two places is nearly fourteen degrees.

NOTE XXX. Sect. II. p. 66.

Ramusio, the publiſher of the moſt ancient and perhaps the moſt valuable Collection of Voyages, is the firſt perſon, as far as I know, who takes notice of this ſtrange error of Ptolemy; Viaggi, vol. i. p. 181. He juſtly obſerves, that the Author

Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea had been more accurate, and had defcribed the peninfula of India as extending from north to fouth; Peripl. p. 24. 29.

NOTE XXXI. Sect. II. p. 68.

This error of Ptolemy juftly merits the name of *enormous*, which I have given to it; and it will appear more furprifing when we recollect, that he muft have been acquainted, not only with what Herodotus relates concerning the circumnavigation of Africa, by order of one of the Egyptian kings, Lib. iv. c. 4., but with the opinion of Eratofthenes, who held that the great extent of the Atlantic ocean was the only thing which prevented a communication between Europe and India by fea; Strab. Geogr. lib. i. p. 113. A. This error, however, muft not be imputed wholly to Ptolemy. Hipparchus, whom we may confider as his guide, had taught that the earth is not furrounded by one continuous ocean, but that it is feparated by different ifthmufes, which divide it into feveral large bafons; Strab. lib. i. p. 11. B. Ptolemy, having adopted this opinion, was induced to maintain that an unknown country extended from Cattigara to Praffum on the fouth-eaft coaft of Africa; Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3 and 5. As Ptolemy's fyftem of geography was univerfally received, this error fpread along with it. In conformity to it the Arabian geographer Edriffi, who wrote in the twelfth century, taught that a continued tract of land ftretched eaftward from Sofala on the African coaft, until it united with fome part of the Indian continent; D'Anville, Antiq.

Antiq. p. 187. Annexed to the firft volume of Gefta Dei per Francos, there is an ancient and very rude map of the habitable globe, delineated according to this idea of Ptolemy. M. Goffellin, in his map entitled Ptolemæi Syftema Geographicum, has exhibited this imaginary tract of land which Ptolemy fuppofes to have connected Africa with Afia; Geographie des Grecs analyfée.

NOTE XXXII. Sect. II. p. 69.

In this part of the Difquifition, as well as in the map prepared for illuftrating it, the geographical ideas of M. D'Anville, to which Major Rennell has given the fanction of his approbation, Introd. p. xxxix. have been generally adopted. But M. Goffellin has lately publifhed, "The Geography of the "Greeks analifed; or, the Syftems of Eratofthenes, Strabo, and "Ptolemy, compared with each other, and with the Knowledge "which the Moderns have acquired;" a learned and ingenious work, in which he differs from his countryman with refpect to many of his determinations. According to M. Goffellin, the Magnum Promontorium, which M. D'Anville concludes to be Cape Romania, at the fouthern extremity of the peninfula of Malacca, is the point of Bragu, at the mouth of the great river Ava; near to which he places Zaba, fuppofed by M. D'Anville, and by Barros, Decad. ii. liv. vi. c. 1. to be fituated on the ftrait of Sincapura or Malacca. The Magnus Sinus of Ptolemy he holds to be the fame with the Gulf of Martaban, not the Gulf of Siam, according to M. D'Anville's decifion. The

 pofition

position of Cattigara, as he endeavours to prove, correſponds to that of Mergui, a conſiderable port on the weſt coaſt of the kingdom of Siam, and that Thinæ, or Sinæ Metropolis, which M. D'Anville removes as far as Sin-hoa, in the kingdom of Cochin-China, is ſituated on the ſame river with Mergui, and now bears the name of Tana-ſerim. The Ibadij Inſula of Ptolemy, which M. D'Anville determines to be Sumatra, he contends, is one of that cluſter of ſmall iſles which lie off this part of the coaſt of Siam; p. 137—148. According to M. Goſſellin's ſyſtem, the ancients never ſailed through the Straits of Malacca, had no knowledge of the iſland of Sumatra, and were altogether unacquainted with the Eaſtern Ocean. If to any of my readers theſe opinions appear to be well founded, the navigation and commerce of the ancients in India muſt be circumſcribed within limits ſtill more confined than thoſe which I have allotted to them. From the Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 7. we learn that Cheen was an ancient name of the kingdom of Pegu; as that country borders upon Ava, where M. Goſſellin places the Great Promontory, this near reſemblance of names may appear, perhaps, to confirm his opinion that Sinæ Metropolis was ſituated on this coaſt, and not ſo far Eaſt as M. D'Anville has placed it.

As Ptolemy's geography of this eaſtern diviſion of Aſia is more erroneous, obſcure, and contradictory than in any other part of his work, and as all the manuſcripts of it, both Greek and Latin, are remarkably incorrect in the two chapters which contain the deſcription of the countries beyond the Ganges, M. D'Anville, in his Memoir concerning

the limits of the world known to the ancients beyond the Ganges, has admitted into it a larger portion of conjecture than we find in the other researches of that cautious geographer. He likewise builds more than usual upon the resemblances between the ancient and modern names of places, though at all times he discovers a propensity, perhaps too great, to trace these, and to rest upon them. These resemblances are often, indeed, very striking, and have led him to many happy discoveries. But in perusing his works, it is impossible, I should think, not to perceive that some which he mentions are far fetched and fanciful. Whenever I follow him, I have adopted only, such conclusions as seem to be established with his accustomed accuracy.

NOTE XXXIII. Sect. II. p. 78.

The Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea has marked the distances of many of the places which he mentions, with such accuracy as renders it a nearer approach, than what is to be found in any writer of antiquity, to a complete survey of the coast from Myos-hormus, on the west side of the Arabian Gulf, along the shores of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and Caramania, to the mouth of the Indus, and thence down the west coast of the Indian Peninsula to Musiris and Barace. This adds to the value of this short treatise, which, in every other respect, possesses great merit. It may be considered as a remarkable proof of the extent and

accuracy of this Author's intelligence concerning India, that he is the only ancient writer who appears in any degree to have been acquainted with the great division of the country, which still subsists, viz. Indostan Proper, comprehending the northern provinces of the Peninsula, and the Deccan, comprehending the southern provinces. "From Barygaza (says he) the continent "stretches to the south; hence that district is called Dachina-"bades, for, in the language of the country, the south is called "Dachanos;" Peripl. p. 29. As the Greeks and Romans, when they adopt any foreign name, always gave it a termination peculiar to their own language, which the grammatical structure of both tongues rendered, in some degree, necessary, it is evident that Dachanos is the same with Deccan, which word has still the same signification, and is still the name of that division of the Peninsula. The northern limit of the Deccan at present is the river Nerbuddah, where our Author likewise fixes it. Peripl. ibid.

NOTE XXXIV. Sect. II. p. 81.

Though, in deducing the latitudes of places from observations of the sun or stars, the ancient astronomers neglected several corrections, which ought to have been applied, their results were sometimes exact to a few minutes, but at other times they appear to have been erroneous to the extent of two, or even three degrees, and may perhaps be reckoned, one with another, to have come within half a degree of the truth. This

part of the ancient geography would therefore have been tolerably accurate, if there had been a fufficient number of fuch determinations. Thefe, however, were far from being numerous, and appear to have been confined to fome of the more remarkable places in the countries which furround the Mediterranean fea.

When, from want of more accurate obfervations, the latitude was inferred from the length of the longeft or fhorteft day, no great degree of precifion was, in any cafe, to be expected, and leaft of all in the vicinity of the Equator. An error of a quarter of an hour, which, without fome mode of meafuring time more accurate than ancient obfervers could employ, was not eafily avoided, might produce, in fuch fituations, an error of four degrees in the determination of the latitude.

With refpect to places in the torrid zone, there was another refource for determining the latitude. This was by obferving the time of the year when the fun was vertical to any place, or when bodies that ftood perpendicular to the horizon had no fhadow at noon-day; the fun's diftance from the Equator at that time, which was known from the principles of aftronomy, was equal to the latitude of the place. We have inftances of the application of this method in the determination of the parallels of Syene and Meroe. The accuracy which this method would admit of, feems to be limited to about half a degree, and this only on the fuppofition that the obferver was ftationary; for if he was travelling from one place to another,

and had not an opportunity of correcting the obfervation of one day by that of the day following, he was likely to deviate much more confiderably from the truth.

With refpect to the longitude of places, as eclipfes of the moon are not frequent, and could feldom be of ufe for determining it, and only when there were aftronomers to obferve them with accuracy, they may be left out of the account altogether when we are examining the geography of remote countries. The differences of the meridians of places were therefore anciently afcertained entirely by the bearings and diftances of one place from another, and of confequence all the errors of reckonings, furveys, and itineraries, fell chiefly upon the longitude, in the fame manner as happens at prefent in a fhip which has no method of determining its longitude, but by comparing the dead-reckoning with the obfervations of the latitude; though with this difference, that the errors, to which the moft fkilful of the ancient navigators was liable, were far greater than what the moft ignorant fhip-mafter of modern times, provided with a compafs, can well commit. The length of the Mediterranean meafured, in degrees of longitude, from the Pillars of Hercules to the Bay of Iffus, is lefs than forty degrees; but in Ptolemy's maps it is more than fixty, and, in general, his longitudes, counting from the meridian of Alexandria, efpecially toward the Eaft, are erroneous nearly in the fame proportion. It appears, indeed, that in remote feas, the coafts were often delineated from an imperfect account of the diftances failed, without the leaft knowledge of the bearings or direction of the fhip's courfe. Ptolemy,

Ptolemy, it is true, used to make an allowance of about one-third for the winding of a ship's course, Geogr. lib. i. c. 12.; but it is plain, that the application of this general rule could seldom lead to an accurate conclusion. Of this there is a striking instance in the form which that geographer has given to the Peninsula of India. From the Barygazenum Promontorium to the place marked Locus unde solvunt in Chrysen navigantes, that is, from Surat on the Malabar coast, to about Narsapour on the Coromandel coast, the distance measured along the sea-shore is nearly the same with what it is in reality; that is, about five hundred and twenty leagues. But the mistake in the direction is astonishing, for the Malabar and Coromandel coast, instead of stretching to the south, and intersecting one another at Cape Comorin, in a very acute angle, are extended by Ptolemy almost in the same straight line from west to east, declining a little to the south. This coast is, at the same time, marked with several bays and promontories, nearly resembling, in their position, those which actually exist on it. All these circumstances compared together, point out very clearly what were the materials from which the ancient map of India was composed. The ships which had visited the coast of that country, had kept an account of the time which they took to sail from one place to another, and had marked, as they stood along shore, on what hand the land lay, when they shaped their course across a bay, or doubled a promontory. This imperfect journal, with an inaccurate account, perhaps, of the latitude of one or two places, was probably all the information concerning the coast of India, which Ptolemy was able to procure. That he should have been able to procure

cure

cure no better information from merchants who sailed with no particular view of exploring the coast, will not appear wonderful, if we consider that even the celebrated Periplus of Hanno would not enable a geographer to lay down the coast of Africa with more precision, than Ptolemy has delineated that of India.

NOTE XXXV. Sect. II. p. 89.

The introduction of the silk-worm into Europe, and the effects which this produced, came under the view of Mr. Gibbon, in writing the history of the Emperor Justinian, and though it was an incident of subordinate importance only, amidst the multiplicity of great transactions which must have occupied his attention, he has examined this event with an accuracy, and related it with a precision, which would have done honour to an author who had no higher object of research. Vol. iv. p. 71, &c. Nor is it here only that I am called upon to ascribe to him this merit. The subject of my inquiries has led me several times upon ground which he had gone over, and I have uniformly received information from the industry and discernment with which he has surveyed it.

NOTE

NOTE XXXVI. SECT. III. p. 94.

THIS voyage, together with the obfervations of Abu Zeid al Hafan of Siraf, was publifhed by M. Renaudot, A. D. 1718, under the title of "Anciennes Relations des Indes, et de la "Chine, de deux Voyageurs Mahometans, qui y allerent "dans le Neuvieme Siecle traduites de Arabe, avec des re- "marques fur les principaux endroits de ces Relations." As M. Renaudot, in his remarks, reprefents the literature and police of the Chinefe, in colours very different from thofe of the fplendid defcriptions which a blind admiration had prompted the Jefuits to publifh, two zealous miffionaries have called in queftion the authenticity of thefe Relations, and have afferted that the authors of them had never been in China; P. Premare Lettr. edifiantes et curieufes, tom. xix. p. 420, &c. P. Parennin, ibid. tom. xxi. p. 158, &c. Some doubts concerning their authenticity were entertained likewife by feveral learned men in England, on account of M. Renaudot's having given no notice of the manufcript which he tranflated, but that he found it in the library of M. le Comte de Seignelay. As no perfon had feen the manufcript fince that time, the doubts increafed, and M. Renaudot was charged with the crime of impofing upon the public. But the Colbert Manufcripts having been depofited in the King's Library, as (fortunately for literature) moft private collections are in France, M. de Guignes, after a long fearch, difcovered the identical manufcript to which

which M. Renaudot refers. It appears to have been written in the twelfth century; Journal des Scavans, Dec. 1764, p. 315, &c. As I had not the French edition of M. Renaudot's book, my references are made to the English tranſlation. The Relation of the two Arabian Travellers is confirmed, in many points, by their countryman Maſſoudi, who publiſhed his treatiſe on univerſal hiſtory, to which he gives the fantaſtical title of "Meadows of Gold, and Mines of "Jewels," a hundred and ſix years after their time. From him, likewiſe, we receive ſuch an account of India in the tenth century, as renders it evident that the Arabians had then acquired an extenſive knowledge of that country. According to his deſcription, the peninſula of India was divided into four kingdoms. The firſt was compoſed of the provinces ſituated on the Indus, and the rivers which fall into it; the capital of which was Moultan. The capital of the ſecond kingdom was Canoge, which, from the ruins of it ſtill remaining, appears to have been a very large city; Rennell's Memoirs, p. 54. In order to give an idea of its populouſneſs, the Indian hiſtorians aſſert, that it contained thirty thouſand ſhops, in which betel-nut was ſold, and ſixty thouſand ſets of muſicians and ſingers, who paid a tax to government; Feriſhta, tranſlated by Dow, vol. i. p. 32. The third kingdom was Cachemire. Maſſoudi, as far as I know, is the firſt author who mentions this paradiſe of India, of which he gives a ſhort but juſt deſcription. The fourth is the kingdom of Guzerate, which he repreſents as the greateſt and moſt powerful; and he concurs with the two Arabian Travellers, in giving the ſovereigns of it the appellation of Balhara. What Maſſoudi relates concerning India is more

 worthy

worthy of notice, as he himſelf had viſited that country; Notices et Extraits des Manuſcrits de la Bibliotheque du Roi, tom. i. p. 9, 10. Maſſoudi confirms what the two Arabian Travellers relate, concerning the extraordinary progreſs of the Indians in aſtronomical ſcience. According to his account, a temple was built during the reign of Brahman, the firſt monarch of India, with twelve towers, repreſenting the twelve ſigns of the zodiac; and in which was delineated, a view of all the ſtars as they appear in the heavens. In the ſame reign was compoſed the famous Sind-Hind, which ſeems to be the ſtandard treatiſe of Indian aſtronomy; Notices, &c. tom. i. p. 7. Another Arabian author, who wrote about the middle of the fourteenth century, divides India into three parts. The northern, comprehending all the provinces on the Indus. The middle, extending from Guzerate to the Ganges. The ſouthern, which he denominates Comar, from Cape Comorin; Notices, &c. tom. ii. p. 46.

NOTE XXXVII. SECT. III. p. 95.

THE naval ſkill of the Chineſe ſeems not to have been ſuperior to that of the Greeks, the Romans, or Arabians. The courſe which they held from Canton to Siraf, near the mouth of the Perſian Gulf, is deſcribed by their own authors. They kept as near as poſſible to the ſhore until they reached the iſland of Ceylon, and then doubling Cape Comorin, they failed along the weſt ſide of the Peninſula, as far as the mouth of the Indus,

Indus, and thence ſteered along the coaſt to the place of their deſtination; Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxii. p. 367. Some authors have contended, that both the Arabs and Chineſe were well acquainted with the mariners compaſs, and the uſe of it in navigation; but it is remarkable that in the Arabic, Turkiſh, or Perſian languages there is no original name for the compaſs. They commonly call it *Boſſola*, the Italian name, which ſhews that the thing ſignified is foreign to them as well as the word. There is not one ſingle obſervation, of ancient date, made by the Arabs on the variation of the needle, or any inſtruction deduced from it, for the aſſiſtance of navigators. Sir John Chardin, one of the moſt learned and beſt informed travellers who has viſited the Eaſt, having been conſulted upon this point, returns for anſwer, "I "boldly aſſert, that the Aſiatics are beholden to us for this "wonderful inſtrument, which they had from Europe a long "time before the Portugueſe conqueſts. For, firſt, their "compaſſes are exactly like ours, and they buy them of "Europeans as much as they can, ſcarce daring to meddle with "their needles themſelves. Secondly, It is certain that the "old navigators only coaſted it along, which I impute to their "want of this inſtrument to guide and inſtruct them in the "middle of the ocean. We cannot pretend to ſay that they "were afraid of venturing far from home, for the Arabs, the "firſt navigators in the world, in my opinion, at leaſt for the "Eaſtern ſeas, have, time out of mind, ſailed from the bottom "of the Red Sea, all along the coaſt of Africa; and the "Chineſe have always traded with Java and Sumatra, which

" is a very confiderable voyage. So many iflands uninhabited " and yet productive, fo many lands unknown to the people I " fpeak of, are a proof that the old navigators had not the " art of failing on the main fea. I have nothing but argu- " ment to offer touching this matter, having never met with " any perfon in Perfia or the Indies to inform me when the " compafs was firft known among them, though I made " inquiry of the moft learned men in both countries. I have " failed from the Indies to Perfia in Indian fhips, when no " European has been aboard but myfelf. The pilots were " all Indians, and they ufed the fore-ftaff and quadrant for " their obfervations. Thefe inftruments they have from us, and " made by our artifts, and they do not in the leaft vary from " ours, except that the characters are Arabic. The Arabs are " the moft fkilful navigators of all the Afiatics or Africans; " but neither they nor the Indians make ufe of charts; and " they do not much want them: fome they have, but they " are copied from ours, for they are altogether ignorant of per- " fpective." Inquiry when the Mahomedans firft entered China, p. 141, &c. When M. Niehbuhr was at Cairo, he found a magnetic needle in the poffeffion of a Mahomedan, which ferved to point out the Kaaba, and he gave it the name of *El Magnatis*, a clear proof of its European origin. Voyage en Arabie, tom. ii. p. 169.

NOTE

NOTE XXXVIII. Sect. III. p. 97.

The progrefs of Chriftianity, and of Mahomedanifm, both in China and India, is attefted by fuch evidence as leaves no doubt with refpect to it. This evidence is collected by Affemannus, Biblioth. Orient. vol. iv. p. 437, &c. 521, &c.; and by M. Renaudot, in two Differtations annexed to Anciennes Relations; and by M. de la Croze, Hiftoire de Chriftianifme des Indes. In our own age, however, we know that the number of profelytes to either of thefe religions is extremely fmall, efpecially in India. A Gentoo confiders all the diftinctions and privileges of his caft, as belonging to him by an exclufive and incommunicable right. To convert, or to be converted, are ideas equally repugnant to the principles moft deeply rooted in his mind; nor can either the Catholic or Proteftant miffionaries in India boaft of having overcome thefe prejudices, except among a few in the loweft cafts, or of fuch as have loft their caft altogether. This laft circumftance is a great obftacle to the progrefs of Chriftianity in India. As Europeans eat the flefh of that animal which the Hindoos deem facred, and drink intoxicating liquors, in which practices they are imitated by the converts to Chriftianity, this finks them to a level with the Pariars, the moft contemptible and odious race of men. Some Catholic miffionaries were fo fenfible of this, that they affected to imitate the drefs and manner of living of Brahmins, and refufed to affociate with the Pariars, or to admit them to the participation of the facraments. But this was condemned by the apoftolic legate

legate Tournon, as inconſiſtent with the ſpirit and precepts of the Chriſtian religion; Voyage aux Indes Orientales, par M. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 58. note. Notwithſtanding the labours of miſſionaries for upwards of two hundred years, (ſays a late ingenious writer,) and the eſtabliſhments of different Chriſtian nations, who ſupport and protect them, out of, perhaps, one hundred millions of Hindoos, there are not twelve thouſand Chriſtians, and thoſe almoſt entirely *Chancalas*, or outcaſts. Sketches relating to the hiſtory, religion, learning, and manners of the Hindoos, p. 48. The number of Mahomedans, or Moors, now in Indoſtan, is ſuppoſed to be near ten millions; but they are not the original inhabitants of the country, but the deſcendants of adventurers, who have been pouring in from Tartary, Perſia, and Arabia, ever ſince the invaſion of Mahmoud of Gazna, A. D. 1002, the firſt Mahomedan conqueror of India. Orme Hiſt. of Military Tranſact. in Indoſtan, vol. i. p. 24. Herbelot, Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Gaznaviah.* As the manners of the Indians in ancient times ſeem to have been, in every reſpect, the ſame with thoſe of the preſent age, it is probable, that the Chriſtians and Mahomedans, ſaid to be ſo numerous in India and China, were chiefly foreigners, allured thither by a lucrative commerce, or their deſcendants. The number of Mahomedans in China has been conſiderably increaſed by a practice, common among them, of buying children in years of famine, whom they educate in the Mahomedan religion. Hiſt. Genev. des Voyages, tom. vi. p. 357.

NOTE

NOTE XXXIX. Sect. III. p. 102.

From the Chronicle of Andrew Dandulo, Doge of Venice, who was elevated to that high ftation at a time when his countrymen had eftablifhed a regular trade with Alexandria, and imported from it all the productions of the Eaft, it was natural to expect fome information concerning their early trade with that country; but, except an idle tale concerning fome Venetian fhips which had failed to Alexandria about the year 828, contrary to a decree of the ftate, and which ftole thence the body of St. Mark; Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xii. lib. 8. c. 2. p. 170.; I find no other hint concerning the communication between the two countries. On the contrary, circumftances occur, which fhew that the refort of Europeans to Egypt had ceafed, almoft entirely, for fome time. Prior to the feventh and eighth centuries, the greater part of the public deeds in Italy, and in other countries of Europe, were written upon paper fabricated of the Egyptian Papyrus; but after that period, as Europeans no longer ventured to trade in Alexandria, almoft all charters and other deeds are written upon parchment. Murat. Antiq. Ital. Medii Ævi, vol. iii. p. 832. I have been induced, both in the text and in this note, to ftate thefe particulars concerning the interruption of trade between the Chriftians and Mahometans fo fully, in order to correct an error into which feveral modern authors have fallen, by fuppofing, that foon after the firft conquefts of the Caliphs, the trade with India returned into its ancient channels, and the mer-

chants of Europe reforted with the fame freedom as formerly to the ports of Egypt and Syria.

NOTE XL. Sect. III. p. 106.

It is proper to remark (fays Mr. Stewart) that the Indians have an admirable method of rendering their religion lucrative, it being ufual for the Faquirs to carry with them, in their pilgrimages from the fea-coafts to the interior parts, pearls, corals, fpices, and other precious articles, of fmall bulk, which they exchange, on their return, for gold-duft, mufk, and other things of a fimilar nature, concealing them eafily in their hair, and in the cloths round their middle, carrying on, in proportion to their numbers, no inconfiderable traffic by thefe means. Account of the Kingdom of Thibet, Philof. Tranfact. vol. lxvii. part ii. p. 483.

NOTE XLI. Sect. III. p. 113.

Caffa is the moft commodious ftation for trade in the Black Sea. While in the hands of the Genoefe, who kept poffeffion of it above two centuries, they rendered it the feat of an extenfive and flourifhing commerce. Even under all the difadvantages of its fubjection, at prefent, to the Turkifh government, it continues to be a place of confiderable trade. Sir John Chardin, who vifited it A. D. 1672, relates, that, during

his residence of forty days there, above four hundred ships arrived at Caffa, or sailed from it. Voyages, i. 48. He observed there, several remains of Genoese magnificence. The number of its inhabitants, according to M. Peysonnel, amounts still to eighty thousand. Commerce de la Mer Noire, tom. i. p. 15. He describes its trade as very great.

NOTE XLII. Sect. III. p. 115.

The rapacity and insolence of the Genoese settled in Constantinople, are painted by Nicephorus Gregoras, an eye-witness of their conduct, in very striking colours. "They," says he, "now," i. e. about the year 1340, "dreamed that they "had acquired the dominion of the sea, and claimed an exclusive "right to the trade of the Euxine, prohibiting the Greeks "to sail to the Mæotis, the Chersonesus, or any part of the "coast beyond the mouth of the Danube, without a licence from "them. This exclusion they extended likewise to the Vene-"tians, and their arrogance proceeded so far as to form a "scheme of imposing a toll upon every vessel passing through "the Bosphorus." Lib. xviii. c. 2. § 1.

NOTE XLIII. Sect. III. p. 115.

A permission from the Pope was deemed ſo neceſſary to authoriſe a commercial intercourſe with infidels, that long after this period, in the year 1454, Nicolas V. in his famous bull in favour of prince Henry of Portugal, among other privileges, grants him a licence to trade with Mahomedans, and refers to ſimilar conceſſions from Pope Martin V., and Eugenius, to kings of Portugal. Leibnitz Codex Jur. Gent. Diplomat. Pars I. p. 489.

NOTE XLIV. Sect. III. p. 117.

Neither Jovius, the profeſſed panegyriſt of the Medici, nor Jo. M. Brutus, their detractor, though both mention the exorbitant wealth of the family, explain the nature of the trade by which it was acquired. Even Machiavel, whoſe genius delighted in the inveſtigation of every circumſtance which contributed to aggrandize or depreſs nations, ſeems not to have viewed the commerce of his country as a ſubject that merited any elucidation. Denina, who has entitled the firſt chapter of his eighteenth book, "The Origin of the Medici, and the Com-"mencement of their Power and Grandeur," furniſhes little information with regard to the trade carried on by them. This ſilence

ſilence of ſo many authors is a proof that hiſtorians had not yet begun to view commerce as an object of ſuch importance in the political ſtate of nations, as to enter into any detail concerning its nature and effects. From the references of different writers to Scipio Ammirato, Iſtorie Fiorentine; to Pagnini, Della Decima ed altri gravezze della Mercatura di Fiorentini, and to Balducci, Practica della Mercatura, I ſhould imagine that ſomething more ſatisfactory may be learned concerning the trade both of the republic and family of the Medici; but I could not find any of theſe books either in Edinburgh or in London.

NOTE XLV. Sect. III. p. 117.

Leibnitz has preſerved a curious paper, containing the inſtructions of the republic of Florence to the two ambaſſadors ſent to the Soldan of Egypt, in order to negociate this treaty with him, together with the report of theſe ambaſſadors on their return. The great object of the republic was, to obtain liberty of trading in all parts of the Soldan's dominions, upon the ſame terms with the Venetians. The chief privileges which they ſolicited, were; 1. A perfect freedom of admiſſion into every port belonging to the Soldan, protection while they continued in it, and liberty of departure at what time they choſe. 2. Permiſſion to have a conſul, with the ſame rights and juriſdiction as thoſe of the Venetians; and liberty to build a church, a warehouſe, and a bath, in every place where they ſettled. 3. That they ſhould not pay for goods imported or exported higher duties than were paid by the Venetians. 4. That the

effects of any Florentine who died in the dominions of the Soldan ſhould be conſigned to the conſul. 5. That the gold and ſilver coin of Florence ſhould be received in payments. All theſe privileges (which ſhew on what equal and liberal terms Chriſtians and Mahomedans now carried on trade) the Florentines obtained; but from the cauſes mentioned in the text, they ſeem never to have acquired any conſiderable ſhare in the commerce with India. Leibnitz, Mantiſſa Cod. Jur. Gent. Diplom. Pars altera, p. 163.

NOTE XLVI. Sect. III. p. 121.

The Eaſtern parts of Aſia are now ſo completely explored, that the firſt imperfect accounts of them, by Marco Polo, attract little of that attention which was originally excited by the publication of his travels; and ſome circumſtances in his narrative have induced different authors to juſtify this neglect, by calling in queſtion the truth of what he relates, and even to aſſert that he had never viſited thoſe countries which he pretends to deſcribe. He does not, ſay they, aſcertain the poſition of any one place, by ſpecifying its longitude or latitude. He gives names to provinces and cities, particularly in his deſcription of Cathay, which have no reſemblance to thoſe which they now bear. We may obſerve, however, that as Marco Polo ſeems to have been, in no degree, a man of ſcience, it was not to be expected that he ſhould fix the poſition of places with geographical accuracy. As he travelled through China, either in

the ſuite of the great Khan, or in execution of his orders, it is probable that the names which he gives to different provinces and cities, are thoſe by which they were known to the Tartars, in whoſe ſervice he was, not their original Chineſe names. Some inaccuracies which have been obſerved in the relation of his travels, may be accounted for, by attending to one circumſtance, that it was not publiſhed from a regular journal, which, perhaps, the viciſſitudes in his ſituation, during ſuch a long ſeries of adventures, did not permit him to keep, or to preſerve. It was compoſed after his return to his native country, and chiefly from recollection. But notwithſtanding this diſadvantage, his account of thoſe regions of the Eaſt, towards which my inquiries have been directed, contains information with reſpect to ſeveral particulars, altogether unknown in Europe at that time, the accuracy of which is now fully confirmed. I ſhall mention ſome of theſe, which, though they relate to matters of no great conſequence, afford the beſt proof of his having viſited theſe countries, and of his having obſerved the manners and cuſtoms of the people with attention. He gives a diſtinct account of the nature and preparation of Sago, the principal article of ſubſiſtence among all the nations of Malayan race, and he brought the firſt ſpecimen of this ſingular production to Venice, Lib. ii. c. 16. He takes notice, likewiſe, of the general cuſtom of chewing Betel, and his deſcription of the mode of preparing it, is the ſame with that ſtill in uſe. Ramus. Viaggi, i. p. 55. D. 56. B. He even deſcends into ſuch detail as to mention the peculiar manner of feeding horſes in India, which ſtill continues. Ramus. p. 53. F. What is of more importance, we learn from him, that the trade with Alexandria continued when

he travelled through India, to be carried on in the ſame manner as I conjectured it to have been in ancient times. The commodities of the Eaſt were ſtill brought to the Malabar coaſt by veſſels of the country, and conveyed thence, together with pepper, and other productions peculiar to that part of India, by ſhips which arrived from the Red Sea. Lib. iii. c. 27. This, perhaps, may account for the ſuperior quality which Sanudo aſcribes to the goods brought to the coaſt of Syria from the Perſian Gulf, above thoſe imported into Egypt by the Red Sea. The former were choſen and purchaſed in the places where they grew, or where they were manufactured, by the merchants of Perſia, who ſtill continued their voyages to every part of the Eaſt; while the Egyptian merchants, in making up their cargoes, depended upon the aſſortment of goods brought to the Malabar coaſt by the natives. To ſome perſons in his own age, what Marco Polo related concerning the numerous armies and immenſe revenues of the Eaſtern princes, appeared ſo extravagant, (though perfectly conſonant to what we now know concerning the population of China, and the wealth of Indoſtan,) that they gave him the name of *Meſſer Marco Millioni.* Prefat. de Ramus. p. 4. But among perſons better informed, the reception he met with was very different. Columbus, as well as the men of ſcience with whom he correſponded, placed ſuch confidence in the veracity of his relations, that upon them, the ſpeculations and theories, which led to the diſcovery of the New World, were in a great meaſure founded. Life of Columbus by his Son, c. 7, and 8.

NOTE XLVII. Sect. III. p. 128.

In the year 1301, Joanna of Navarre, the wife of Philip le Bel, king of France, having been ſome days in Bruges, was ſo much ſtruck with the grandeur and wealth of that city, and particularly with the ſplendid appearance of the citizens wives, that ſhe was moved (ſays Guicciardini) by female envy to exclaim with indignation, "I thought that I had been the only "queen here, but I find there are many hundreds more." Deſcrit. de Paeſi Baſſi, p. 408.

NOTE XLVIII. Sect. III. p. 130.

In the hiſtory of the reign of Charles V. vol. i. p. 163. I obſerved, that, during the war excited by the famous League of Cambray, while Charles VIII. of France could not procure money at a leſs premium than forty-two per cent., the Venetians raiſed what ſums they pleaſed at five per cent. But this, I imagine, is not to be conſidered as the uſual commercial rate of intereſt at that period, but as a voluntary and public-ſpirited effort of the citizens, in order to ſupport their country at a dangerous criſis. Of ſuch laudable exertions, there are ſeveral ſtriking inſtances in the hiſtory of the republic. In the year 1379, when the Genoeſe, after obtaining a great naval victory

over the Venetians, were ready to attack their capital, the citizens, by a voluntary contribution, enabled the ſenate to fit out ſuch a powerful armament as ſaved their country. Sabellicus, Hiſt. Rer. Venet. Dec. ii. lib. vi. p. 385. 390. In the war with Ferrara, which began in the year 1472, the ſenate, relying upon the attachment of the citizens to their country, required them to bring all their gold and ſilver plate, and jewels, into the public treaſury, upon promiſe of paying the value of them at the concluſion of the war, with five per cent. of intereſt; and this requiſition was complied with cheerfully. Petr. Cyrnæus de Bello Ferrar. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xxi. p. 1016.

NOTE XLIX. Sect. III. p. 130.

Two facts may be mentioned as proofs of an extraordinary extenſion of the Venetian trade at this period.——1. There is in Rymer's Great Collection, a ſeries of grants from the kings of England, of various privileges and immunities to Venetian merchants trading in England, as well as ſeveral commercial treaties with the republic, which plainly indicate a conſiderable increaſe of their tranſactions in that country. Theſe are mentioned in their order by Mr. Anderſon, to whoſe patient induſtry and ſound underſtanding, every perſon engaged in any commercial reſearch muſt have felt himſelf greatly indebted on many occaſions.——2. The eſtabliſhment of a Bank by public authority, the credit of which was founded

on

on that of the ftate. In an age and nation fo well acquainted with the advantages which commerce derives from the inftitution of banks, it is unneceffary to enumerate them. Mercantile tranfactions muft have been numerous and extenfive before the utility of fuch an inftitution could be fully perceived, or the principles of trade could be fo fully underftood as to form the regulations proper for conducting it with fuccefs. Venice may boaft of having given the firft example to Europe of an eftablifhment altogether unknown to the ancients, and which is the pride of the modern commercial fyftem. The conftitution of the bank of Venice was originally founded on fuch juft principles, that it has ferved as a model in the eftablifhment of banks in other countries, and the adminiftration of its affairs has been conducted with fo much integrity, that its credit has never been fhaken. I cannot fpecify the precife year in which the bank of Venice was eftablifhed by a law of the State. Anderfon fuppofes it to have been A. D. 1157. Chron. Deduct. vol. i. p. 84. Sandi Stor. Civil. Venez. part II. vol. ii. p. 768. Part III. vol. ii. p. 892.

NOTE L. SECT. III. p. 132.

AN Italian author of good credit, and a diligent inquirer into the ancient hiftory of its different governments, affirms, that if the feveral States which traded in the Mediterranean had united together, Venice alone would have been fuperior to them all, in naval power, and in extent of commerce.

Denina Révolutions d'Italie traduits par l'Abbè Jardin, lib. xviii. c. 6. tom. vi. p. 339. About the year 1420, the Doge Mocenigo gives a view of the naval force of the republic, which confirms this decision of Denina. At that time it consisted of three thousand trading vessels, of various dimensions, on board which were employed seventeen thousand sailors; of three hundred ships of greater force, manned by eight thousand sailors; and of forty-five large galeasses, or caracks, navigated by eleven thousand sailors. In public and private arsenals sixteen thousand carpenters were employed. Mar. Sanuto Vite de Duchi di Venezia, ap. Mur. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xxii. p. 959.

NOTE LI. Sect. III. p. 146.

When we take a view of the form and position of the habitable parts of Asia and Africa, we shall see good reasons for considering the camel as the most useful of all the animals over which the inhabitants of these great continents have acquired dominion. In both, some of the most fertile districts are separated from each other by such extensive tracts of barren sands, the seats of desolation and drought, as seem to exclude the possibility of communication between them. But as the ocean, which appears, at first view, to be placed as an insuperable barrier between different regions of the earth, has been rendered, by navigation, subservient to their mutual intercourse; so, by means of the camel, which the Arabians emphatically call *The Ship of the Desert*,

Desert, the most dreary wastes are traversed; and the nations which they disjoin are enabled to trade with one another. Those painful journies, impracticable by any other animal, the camel performs with astonishing dispatch. Under heavy burdens of six, seven, and eight hundred weight, they can continue their march during a long period of time, with little food or rest, and sometimes without tasting water for eight or nine days. By the wise œconomy of Providence, the camel seems formed of purpose to be the beast of burden in those regions where he is placed, and where his service is most wanted. In all the districts of Asia and Africa, where deserts are most frequent and extensive, the camel abounds. This is his proper station, and beyond this the sphere of his activity does not extend far. He dreads alike the excesses of heat and of cold, and does not agree even with the mild climate of our temperate zone. As the first trade in Indian commodities, of which we have any authentic account, was carried on by means of camels, Genesis, xxxvii. 25, and as it is by employing them that the conveyance of these commodities has been so widely extended over Asia and Africa, the particulars which I have mentioned concerning this singular animal appeared to me necessary towards illustrating this part of my subject. If any of my readers desire more full information, and wish to know how the ingenuity and art of man have seconded the intentions of Nature, in training the camel, from his birth, for that life of exertion and hardship to which he is destined, he may consult Histoire Naturelle, by M. le Comte de Buffon, artic. *Chameau et Dromedaire*, one of the most eloquent, and, as far as I can judge from examining the authorities

which he has quoted, one of the moſt accurate, deſcriptions given by that celebrated writer. M. Volney, whoſe accuracy is well known, gives a deſcription of the manner in which the camel performs its journeys, which may be agreeable to ſome of my readers. " In travelling through the deſert, camels " are chiefly employed, becauſe they conſume little, and carry " a great load. His ordinary burden is about ſeven hundred " and fifty pounds; his food, whatever is given him, ſtraw, " thiſtles, the ſtones of dates, beans, barley, &c. With a " pound of food a day, and as much water, he will travel for " weeks. In the journey from Cairo to Suez, which is forty " or forty-ſix hours, they neither eat nor drink; but theſe " long faſts, if often repeated, wear them out. Their uſual " rate of travelling is very ſlow, hardly above two miles an " hour; it is vain to puſh them, they will not quicken their " pace, but, if allowed ſome ſhort reſt, they will travel fifteen " eighteen hours a day." Voyage, tom. ii. p. 383.

NOTE LII. Sect. III. p. 148.

In order to give an adequate idea of the extenſive circulation of Indian commodities by land carriage, it would be neceſſary to trace the route, and to eſtimate the number, of the various caravans by which they are conveyed. Could this be executed with accuracy, it would be a curious object of geographical reſearch, as well as a valuable addition to commercial hiſtory. Though it is inconſiſtent with the brevity which I have uniformly ſtudied in conducting this Diſquiſition, to enter into a detail

detail of ſo great length, it may be proper here, for illuſtrating this part of my ſubject, to take ſuch a view of two caravans which viſit Mecca, as may enable my readers to eſtimate more juſtly the magnitude of their commercial tranſactions. The firſt is the caravan which takes its departure from Cairo in Egypt, and the other from Damaſcus in Syria; and I ſelect theſe, both becauſe they are the moſt conſiderable, and becauſe they are deſcribed by authors of undoubted credit, who had the beſt opportunities of receiving full information concerning them. The former is compoſed not only of pilgrims from every part of Egypt, but of thoſe which arrive from all the ſmall Mahomedan ſtates on the African coaſt of the Mediterranean, from the empire of Morocco, and even from the Negroe kingdoms on the Atlantic. When aſſembled, the caravan conſiſts at leaſt of fifty thouſand perſons, and the number of camels employed in carrying water, proviſions, and merchandize, is ſtill greater. The journey, which, in going from Cairo and returning thither, is not completed in leſs than a hundred days, is performed wholly by land; and as the route lies moſtly through ſandy deſerts, or barren uninhabited wilds, which ſeldom afford any ſubſiſtence, and where often no ſources of water can be found, the pilgrims always undergo much fatigue, and ſometimes muſt endure incredible hardſhips. An early and good deſcription of this caravan is publiſhed by Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 202, &c. Maillet has entered into a minute and curious detail with regard to it; Deſcript. de l'Egypte, part ii. p. 212, &c. Pocock has given a route, together with the length of each day's march, which he received from a perſon who had been fourteen times at Mecca, vol. i. pp. 188, 261, &c.—The caravan from

from Damafcus, compofed of pilgrims from almoft every province of the Turkifh empire, is little inferior to the former in number, and the commerce which it carries on is hardly lefs valuable. Voyage de Volney, tom. ii. p. 251, &c. This pilgrimage was performed in the year 1741, by Khizeh Abdulkurreem, whom I formerly mentioned, Note IV. p. 186. He gives the ufual route from Damafcus to Mecca, computed by hours, the common mode of reckoning a journey in the Eaft through countries little frequented. According to the moft moderate eftimate, the diftance between the two cities, by his account, muft be above a thoufand miles; a great part of the journey is through a defert, and the pilgrims not only endure much fatigue, but are often expofed to great danger from the wild Arabs. Memoirs, p. 114, &c. It is a fingular proof of the predatory fpirit of the Arabs, that although all their independent tribes are zealous Mahomedans, yet they make no fcruple of plundering the caravans of pilgrims, while engaged in performing one of the moft indifpenfable duties of their religion. Great as thefe caravans are, we muft not fuppofe that all the pilgrims who vifit Mecca belong to them; fuch confiderable additions are received from the extenfive dominions of Perfia, from every province of Indoftan, and the countries to the Eaft of it, from Abyffinia, from various ftates on the Southern coaft of Africa, and from all parts of Arabia, that when the whole are affembled they have been computed to amount to two hundred thoufand. In fome years the number is farther increafed by fmall bands of pilgrims from feveral interior provinces of Africa, the names and fituations of which are juft beginning to be known in Europe. For this laft fact we are indebted

indebted to the Aſſociation for promoting the Diſcovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, formed by ſome Britiſh Gentlemen upon principles ſo liberal, and with views ſo public-ſpirited, as do honour to themſelves and to their country. Proceedings, &c. p. 174.

In the Report of the Committee of the Privy Council on the Slave Trade, other particulars are contained; and it appears that the commerce carried on by caravans in the interior parts of Africa is not only widely extended, but of conſiderable value. Beſides the great caravan which proceeds to Cairo, and is joined by Mahomedan pilgrims from every part of Africa, there are caravans which have no object but commerce, which ſet out from Fez, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and other States on the ſea-coaſt, and penetrate far into the interior country. Some of them take no leſs than fifty days to reach the place of their deſtination; and, as the medium of their rate of travelling may be eſtimated at about eighteen miles a day, the extent of their journey may be eaſily computed. As both the time of their out-ſet, and their route, are known, they are met by the people of all the countries through which they travel, who trade with them. Indian goods of every kind form a conſiderable article in this traffic, in exchange for which the chief commodity they can give is Slaves. Part vi.

As the journeys of the caravans, which are purely commercial, do not commence at ſtated ſeaſons, and their routes vary according to the convenience or fancy of the merchants of whom they are compoſed, a deſcription cannot be given of them with the ſame degree of accuracy. But by attending to the

the accounts of ſome authors, and the occaſional hints of others, ſufficient information may be gathered to ſatisfy us, that the circulation of Eaſtern goods by theſe caravans is very extenſive. The ſame intercourſe which was anciently kept up by the provinces in the North-eaſt of Aſia with Indoſtan and China, and which I formerly deſcribed, ſtill ſubſiſts. Among all the numerous tribes of Tartars, even of thoſe which retain their paſtoral manners in greateſt purity, the demand for the productions of theſe two countries is very conſiderable. Voyages de Pallas, tom. i. p. 357, &c. tom. ii. p. 422. In order to ſupply them with theſe, caravans ſet out annually from Boghar, (Hackluyt, vol. i. p. 332.) Samarcand, Thibet, and ſeveral other places, and return with large cargoes of Indian and Chineſe goods. But the trade carried on between Ruſſia and China in this part of Aſia is by far the moſt extenſive and beſt known. Some connection of this kind, it is probable, was kept up between them from the earlieſt period, but it increaſed greatly after the interior parts of Ruſſia were rendered more acceſſible by the conqueſts of Zingis Khan and Tamerlane. The commercial nations of Europe were ſo well acquainted with the mode of carrying on this trade, that ſoon after the Portugueſe had opened the communication with the Eaſt by the Cape of Good Hope, an attempt was made in order to diminiſh the advantages which they derived from this diſcovery, to prevail on the Ruſſians to convey Indian and Chineſe commodities through the whole extent of their empire, partly by land-carriage and partly by means of navigable rivers, to ſome port on the Baltic, from which they might be diſtributed through every part of Europe. Ramuſio Raccolto da Viaggi, vol. i. p. 374. B.

This ſcheme, too great for the monarch then on the throne of Ruſſia to carry into execution, was rendered practicable by the conqueſts of Ivan Baſilowitz, and the genius of Peter the Great. Though the capitals of the two empires were ſituated at the immenſe diſtance of ſix thouſand three hundred and ſeventy-eight miles from each other, and the route lay for above four hundred miles through an uninhabited deſert, (Bell's Travels, vol. ii. p. 167.) caravans travelled from the one to the other. But though it had been ſtipulated when this intercourſe was eſtabliſhed, that the number of perſons in each caravan ſhould not exceed two hundred, and though they were ſhut up within the walls of a Caravanſerai during the ſhort time they remained in Pekin, and were allowed to deal only with a few merchants, to whom a monopoly of the trade with them had been granted; yet, notwithſtanding all theſe reſtraints and precautions, the jealous vigilance with which the Chineſe government excludes foreigners from a free intercourſe with its ſubjects was alarmed, and the admiſſion of the Ruſſian caravans into the empire was ſoon prohibited. After various negociations, an expedient was at length deviſed, by which the advantages of mutual commerce were ſecured, without infringing the cautious arrangements of Chineſe policy. On the boundary of the two empires, two ſmall towns were built almoſt contiguous, the one inhabited by Ruſſians, the other by Chineſe. To theſe all the marketable productions of their reſpective countries are brought by the ſubjects of each empire; and the furs, the linen and woollen cloth, the leather, the glaſs, &c. of Ruſſia, are exchanged for the ſilk, the cotton, the tea, the rice, the toys, &c. of China. By ſome

 well-

well-judged conceffions of the fovereign now feated on the throne of Ruffia, whofe enlarged mind is fuperior to the illiberal maxims of fome of her predeceffors, this trade is rendered fo flourifhing, that its amount annually is not lefs than eight hundred thoufand pounds fterling, and it is the only trade with China carried on almoft entirely by barter. Mr. Coxe, in his account of the Ruffian difcoveries, has collected, with his ufual attention and difcernment, every thing relative to this branch of trade, the nature and extent of which were little known in Europe. Chap. ii. iii. iv. Nor is this the only place where Ruffia receives Chinefe and Indian commodities. A confiderable fupply of both is brought by caravans of independent Tartars to Orenburg, on the river Jaik, Voyage de Pallas, tom. i. p. 355, &c. to Troitzkaia, on the river Oui, and to other places which I might mention. I have entered into this long detail concerning the mode in which the productions in India and China are circulated through Ruffia, as it affords the moft ftriking inftance, I know, of the great extent to which valuable commodities may be conveyed by land carriage.

NOTE LIII. Sect. IV. p. 152.

The only voyage of difcovery in the Atlantic Ocean towards the South, by any of the ancient commercial ftates in the Mediterranean, is that of Hanno, undertaken by order of the republic of Carthage. As the fituation of that city, fo much nearer the Straits than Tyre, Alexandria, and the other feats

of ancient trade which I have mentioned, gave it more immediate accefs to the ocean ; that circumftance, together with the various fettlements which the Carthaginians had made in different provinces of Spain, naturally fuggefted to them this enterprife, and afforded them the profpect of confiderable advantages from its fuccefs. The voyage of Hanno, inftead of invalidating, feems to confirm the juftnefs of the reafons which I have given, why no fimilar attempt was made by the other commercial ftates in the Mediterranean.

NOTE LIV. Sect. IV. p. 153.

Though the intelligent authors whom I have quoted confidered this voyage of the Phenicians as fabulous, Herodotus mentions a circumftance concerning it, which feems to prove that it had really been performed. " The Phenicians," fays he, " affirmed that, in failing round Africa, they had the fun on " their right hand, which to me appears not to be credible, " though it may be deemed fo by others." Lib. iv. c. 42. This, it is certain, muft have happened, if they really accomplifhed fuch a voyage. The fcience of aftronomy, however, was in that early period fo imperfect, that it was by experience only that the Phenicians could come at the knowledge of this fact; they durft not, without this, have ventured to affert what would have appeared to be an improbable fiction. Even after what they related, Herodotus difbelieved it.

NOTE LV. Sect. IV. p. 161.

Notwithstanding this increasing demand for the productions of India, it is remarkable, that during the sixteenth century some commodities which are now the chief articles of importation from the East, were either altogether unknown, or of little account. Tea, the importation of which, at present, far exceeds that of any other production of the East, has not been in general use, in any country of Europe, a full century; and yet, during that short period, from some singular caprice of taste, or power of fashion, the infusion of a leaf brought from the farthest extremity of the earth, of which it is perhaps the highest praise to say that it is innoxious, has become almost a necessary of life in several parts of Europe, and the passion for it descends from the most elevated to the lowest orders in society. In 1785 it was computed that the whole quantity of tea imported into Europe from China was about nineteen millions of pounds, of which it is conjectured that twelve millions were consumed in Great Britain and the dominions depending upon it. Dodsley's Annual Register for 1784 and 1785, p. 156. The porcelane of China, now as common in many parts of Europe as if it were of domestic manufacture, was not known to the ancients. Marco Polo is the first among the moderns who mentions it. The Portuguese began to import it not long after their first voyage to China, A. D. 1517; but it was a considerable time before the use of it became extensive.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

I SHALL now endeavour to fulfil an engagement which I came under [a], to make ſome obſervations upon the genius, the manners, and inſtitutions of the people of India, as far as they can be traced from the earlieſt ages to which our knowledge of them extends. Were I to enter upon this wide field with an intention of ſurveying its whole extent; were I to view each object which it preſents to a philoſophical inquirer, under all its different aſpects, it would lead me into reſearches and ſpeculations, not only of immenſe length, but altogether foreign from the ſubject of this Diſquiſition. My inquiries and reflections ſhall therefore be confined to what is intimately connected with the deſign of this work. I ſhall collect the facts

[a] See page 21.

which

which the ancients have tranſmitted to us concerning the inſtitutions peculiar to the natives of India, and, by comparing them with what we know of that country, endeavour to deduce ſuch concluſions as tend to point out the circumſtances which have induced the reſt of mankind, in every age, to carry on commercial intercourſe to ſo great an extent with that country.

Of this intercourſe there are conſpicuous proofs in the earlieſt periods concerning which hiſtory affords information. Not only the people contiguous to India, but remote nations, ſeem to have been acquainted, from time immemorial, with its commodities, and to have valued them ſo highly, that in order to procure them they undertook fatiguing, expenſive, and dangerous journeys. Whenever men give a decided preference to the commodities of any particular country, this muſt be owing either to its poſſeſſing ſome valuable natural productions peculiar to its ſoil and climate, or to ſome ſuperior progreſs which its inhabitants have made in induſtry, art, and elegance. It is not to any peculiar excellence in the natural productions of India, that we muſt aſcribe entirely the predilection of ancient nations for its commodities; for, pepper excepted, an article, it muſt be allowed, of great importance, they are little different from thoſe of other tropical countries; and Ethiopia or Arabia might have fully ſupplied the Phenicians, and other trading people of antiquity, with the ſpices, the perfumes, the precious ſtones, the gold and ſilver, which formed the principal articles of their commerce.

Whoever

Whoever then wishes to trace the commerce with India to its source, must search for it, not so much in any peculiarity of the natural productions of that country, as in the superior improvement of its inhabitants. Many facts have been transmitted to us, which, if they are examined with proper attention, clearly demonstrate, that the natives of India were not only more early civilized, but had made greater progress in civilization than any other people. These I shall endeavour to enumerate, and to place them in such a point of view as may serve both to throw light upon the institutions, manners, and arts of the Indians, and to account for the eagerness of all nations to obtain the productions of their ingenious industry.

By the ancient Heathen writers, the Indians were reckoned among those races of men which they denominated *Autochthones* or *Aborigines*, whom they considered as natives of the soil, whose origin could not be traced [b]. By the inspired writers, the wisdom of the East (an expression which is to be understood as a description of their extraordinary progress in science and arts) was early celebrated [c]. In order to illustrate and confirm these explicit testimonies concerning the ancient and high civilization of the inhabitants of India, I shall take a view of their rank and condition as individuals; of their civil policy; of their laws and judicial proceedings; of their useful and elegant arts; of their sciences; and of their religious institutions; as far as information can be gathered from the ac-

[b] Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 151.

[c] 1 Kings, iv. 31.

counts of the Greek and Roman writers, compared with what ftill remains of their ancient acquirements and inftitutions.

I. From the moft ancient accounts of India we learn, that the diftinction of ranks and feparation of profeffions were completely eftablifhed there. This is one of the moft undoubted proofs of a fociety confiderably advanced in its progrefs. Arts in the early ftages of focial life are fo few, and fo fimple, that each man is fufficiently mafter of them all, to gratify every demand of his own limited defires. A favage can form his bow, point his arrows, rear his hut, and hollow his canoe, without calling in the aid of any hand more fkilful than his own [d]. But when time has augmented the wants of men, the productions of art become fo complicated in their ftructure, or fo curious in their fabric, that a particular courfe of education is requifite towards forming the artift to ingenuity in contrivance and expertnefs in execution. In proportion as refinement fpreads, the diftinction of profeffions increafes, and they branch out into more numerous and minute fubdivifions. Prior to the records of authentic hiftory, and even before the moft remote æra to which their own traditions pretend to reach, this feparation of profeffions had not only taken place among the natives of India, but the perpetuity of it was fecured by an inftitution which muft be confidered as the fundamental article in the fyftem of their policy. The whole body of the people was divided into four orders or cafts. The members of the firft, deemed the moft facred, had it for their province, to

[d] Hift. of Amer. vol. iii. 165.

ftudy

ſtudy the principles of religion; to perform its functions; and to cultivate the ſciences. They were the prieſts, the inſtructors, and philoſophers of the nation. The members of the ſecond order were entruſted with the government and defence of the ſtate. In peace they were its rulers and magiſtrates, in war they were the ſoldiers who fought its battles. The third was compoſed of huſbandmen and merchants; and the fourth of artiſans, labourers, and ſervants. None of theſe can ever quit his own caſt, or be admitted into another [e]. The ſtation of every individual is unalterably fixed; his deſtiny is irrevocable; and the walk of life is marked out, from which he muſt never deviate. This line of ſeparation is not only eſtabliſhed by civil authority, but confirmed and ſanctioned by religion; and each order or caſt is ſaid to have proceeded from the Divinity in ſuch a different manner, that to mingle and confound them would be deemed an act of moſt daring impiety [f]. Nor is it between the four different tribes alone that ſuch inſuperable barriers are fixed; the members of each caſt adhere invariably to the profeſſion of their forefathers. From generation to generation, the ſame families have followed, and will always continue to follow, one uniform line of life.

Such arbitrary arrangements of the various members which compoſe a community, ſeems, at firſt view, to be adverſe to improvement either in ſcience or in arts; and by forming

[e] Ayeen Akbery, iii. 81, &c. Sketches relating to the Hiſtory, &c. of the Hindoos, p. 107, &c.

[f] See NOTE I.

around the different orders of men, artificial barriers, which it would be impious to paſs, tends to circumſcribe the operations of the human mind within a narrower ſphere than nature has allotted to them. When every man is at full liberty to direct his efforts towards thoſe objects and that end which the impulſe of his own mind prompts him to prefer, he may be expected to attain that high degree of eminence to which the uncontrouled exertions of genius and induſtry naturally conduct. The regulations of Indian policy, with reſpect to the different orders of men, muſt neceſſarily, at ſome times, check genius in its career, and confine to the functions of an inferior caſt, talents fitted to ſhine in an higher ſphere. But the arrangements of civil government are made, not for what is extraordinary, but for what is common; not for the few, but for the many. The object of the firſt Indian legiſlators was to employ the moſt effectual means of providing for the ſubſiſtence, the ſecurity, and happineſs of all the members of the community over which they preſided. With this view they ſet apart certain races of men for each of the various profeſſions and arts neceſſary in a well-ordered ſociety, and appointed the exerciſe of them to be tranſmitted from father to ſon in ſucceſſion. This ſyſtem, though extremely repugnant to the ideas which we, by being placed in a very different ſtate of ſociety, have formed, will be found, upon attentive inſpection, better adapted to attain the end in view, than a careleſs obſerver is, on a firſt view, apt to imagine. The human mind bends to the law of neceſſity, and is accuſtomed, not only to accommodate itſelf to the reſtraints which the condition of its nature, or the inſtitutions of its country, impoſe, but to acquieſce in them. From

his entrance into life, an Indian knows the ftation allotted to him, and the functions to which he is deftined by his birth. The objects which relate to thefe are the firft that prefent themfelves to his view. They occupy his thoughts, or employ his hands; and, from his earlieft years, he is trained to the habit of doing with eafe and pleafure that which he muft continue through life to do. To this may be afcribed that high degree of perfection confpicuous in many of the Indian manufactures; and though veneration for the practices of their anceftors may check the fpirit of invention, yet, by adhering to thefe, they acquire fuch an expertnefs and delicacy of hand, that Europeans, with all the advantages of fuperior fcience, and the aid of more complete inftruments, have never been able to equal the exquifite execution of their workmanfhip. While this high improvement of their more curious manufactures excited the admiration, and attracted the commerce, of other nations, the feparation of profeffions in India, and the early diftribution of the people into claffes, attached to particular kinds of labour, fecured fuch abundance of the more common and ufeful commodities, as not only fupplied their own wants, but miniftered to thofe of the countries around them.

To this early divifion of the people into cafts, we muft likewife afcribe a ftriking peculiarity in the ftate of India; the permanence of its inftitutions, and the immutability in the manners of its inhabitants. What now is in India, always was there, and is likely ftill to continue: neither the ferocious violence and illiberal fanaticifm of its Mahomedan conquerors, nor the

the power of its European maſters, have effected any conſiderable alteration [g]. The ſame diſtinctions of condition take place, the ſame arrangements in civil and domeſtic ſociety remain, the ſame maxims of religion are held in veneration, and the ſame ſciences and arts are cultivated. Hence, in all ages, the trade with India has been the ſame; gold and ſilver have uniformly been carried thither in order to purchaſe the ſame commodities with which it now ſupplies all nations; and from the age of Pliny to the preſent times, it has been always conſidered and execrated as a gulf which ſwallows up the wealth of every other country, that flows inceſſantly towards it, and from which it never returns [h]. According to the accounts which I have given of the cargoes anciently imported from India, they appear to have conſiſted of nearly the ſame articles with thoſe of the inveſtments in our own times; and whatever difference we may obſerve in them ſeems to have ariſen, not ſo much from any diverſity in the nature of the commodities which the Indians prepared for ſale, as from a variety in the taſtes, or in the wants, of the nations which demanded them.

II. ANOTHER proof of the early and high civilization of the people of India, may be deduced from conſidering their political conſtitution and form of government. The Indians trace back the hiſtory of their own country through an immenſe ſucceſſion of ages, and aſſert, that all Aſia, from the mouth of the Indus on the weſt, to the confines of China on the eaſt, and from the mountains of Thibet on the north, to Cape Comorin on the ſouth, formed a vaſt empire,

[g] See NOTE II. [h] See NOTE III.

ſubject

ſubject to one mighty ſovereign, under whom ruled ſeveral hereditary Princes and Rajahs. But their chronology, which meaſures the life of man in ancient times by thouſands of years, and computes the length of the ſeveral periods, during which it ſuppoſes the world to have exiſted, by millions, is ſo wildly extravagant, as not to merit any ſerious diſcuſſion. We muſt reſt ſatisfied, then, until ſome more certain information is obtained with reſpect to the ancient hiſtory of India, with taking the firſt accounts of that country, which can be deemed authentic, from the Greeks, who ſerved under Alexander the Great. They found kingdoms of conſiderable magnitude eſtabliſhed in that country. The territories of Porus and of Taxiles comprehended a great part of the Panjab, one of the moſt fertile and beſt cultivated countries in India. The kingdom of the Praſij, or Gandaridæ, ſtretched to a great extent on both ſides of the Ganges. All the three, as appears from the ancient Greek writers, were powerful and populous.

THIS deſcription of the partition of India into ſtates of ſuch magnitude, is alone a convincing proof of its having advanced far in civilization. In whatever region of the earth there has been an opportunity of obſerving the progreſs of men in ſocial life, they appear at firſt in ſmall independent tribes or communities. Their common wants prompt them to unite; and their mutual jealouſies, as well as the neceſſity of ſecuring ſubſiſtence, compel them to drive to a diſtance every rival who might encroach on thoſe domains which they conſider as their own. Many ages elapſe before they coaleſce, or acquire ſufficient foreſight to provide for the wants, or ſufficient wiſdom to conduct the affairs of

a numerous ſociety. Even under the genial climate, and in the rich ſoil of India, more favourable perhaps to the union and increaſe of the human ſpecies than any other part of the globe, the formation of ſuch extenſive ſtates, as were eſtabliſhed in that country when firſt viſited by Europeans, muſt have been a work of long time; and the members of them muſt have been long accuſtomed to exertions of uſeful induſtry.

THOUGH monarchical government was eſtabliſhed in all the countries of India to which the knowledge of the ancients extended, the ſovereigns were far from poſſeſſing uncontrouled or deſpotic power. No trace, indeed, is diſcovered there of any aſſembly or public body, the members of which, either in their own right, or as repreſentatives of their fellow-citizens, could interpoſe in enacting laws, or in ſuperintending the execution of them. Inſtitutions deſtined to aſſert and guard the rights belonging to men in a ſocial ſtate, how familiar ſoever the idea may be to the people of Europe, never formed a part of the political conſtitution in any great Aſiatic kingdom. It was to different principles that the natives of India were indebted for reſtrictions which limited the exerciſe of regal power. The rank of individuals was unalterably fixed, and the privileges of the different caſts were deemed inviolable. The monarchs of India, who are all taken from the ſecond of the four claſſes formerly deſcribed, which is intruſted with the functions of government and exerciſe of war, behold among their ſubjects an order of men far ſuperior to themſelves in dignity, and ſo conſcious of their own pre-eminence, both in rank and in ſanctity, that they would deem it degradation and pollution, if they were

were to eat of the ſame food with their ſovereign[k]. Their perſons are ſacred, and even for the moſt heinous crimes they cannot be capitally puniſhed; their blood muſt never be ſhed[l]. To men in this exalted ſtation monarchs muſt look up with reſpect, and reverence them as the miniſters of religion, and the teachers of wiſdom. On important occaſions, it is the duty of ſovereigns to conſult them, and to be directed by their advice. Their admonitions, and even their cenſures, muſt be received with ſubmiſſive reſpect. This right of the Brahmins to offer their opinion with reſpect to the adminiſtration of public affairs was not unknown to the ancients[m]; and in ſome accounts preſerved in India of the events which happened in their own country, princes are mentioned, who, having violated the privileges of the caſts, and diſregarded the remonſtrances of the Brahmins, were depoſed by their authority, and put to death[n].

WHILE the ſacred rights of the Brahmins oppoſed a barrier againſt the encroachments of regal power on one hand, it was circumſcribed on the other by the ideas which thoſe who occupied the higheſt ſtations in ſociety entertained of their own dignity and privileges. As none but the members of the caſt next in rank to that which religion has rendered ſacred, could be employed in any function of the ſtate, the ſovereigns of the

[k] Orme's Diſſert. vol. i. p. 4. Sketches, &c. p. 113.

[l] Code of Gentoo Laws, ch. xxi. § 10. p. 275. 283, &c.

[m] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1029. C.

[n] Account of the Qualities requiſite in a Magiſtrate, prefixed by the Pundits to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. cii and cxvi.

extenſive kingdoms anciently eſtabliſhed in India, found it neceſſary to entruſt them with the ſuperintendence of the cities and provinces too remote to be under their own immediate inſpection. In theſe ſtations they often acquired ſuch wealth and influence, that offices conferred during pleaſure, continued in their families, and they came gradually to form an intermediate order between the ſovereign and his ſubjects; and by the vigilant jealouſy with which they maintained their own dignity and privileges, they conſtrained their rulers to reſpect them, and to govern with equity.

Nor were the benefits of theſe reſtraints upon the power of the ſovereign confined wholly to the two ſuperior orders in the ſtate; they extended, in ſome degree, to the third claſs employed in agriculture. The labours of that numerous and uſeful body of men are ſo eſſential to the preſervation and happineſs of ſociety, that the greateſt attention was paid to render their condition ſecure and comfortable. According to the ideas which prevailed among the natives of India (as we are informed by the firſt Europeans who viſited their country), the ſovereign is conſidered as the ſole univerſal proprietor of all the land in his dominions, and from him is derived every ſpecies of tenure by which his ſubjects can hold it. Theſe lands were let out to the farmers who cultivated them, at a ſtipulated rent, amounting uſually to a fourth part of their annual produce paid in kind [a]. In a country where the price of work is extremely low, and where the labour of cultivation is very inconſiderable, the earth yielding its productions almoſt ſpontaneouſly,

[a] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A. Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 53.

where

where fubfiftence is amazingly cheap, where few clothes are needed, and houfes are built and furnifhed at little expence, this rate cannot be deemed exorbitant or oppreffive. As long as the hufbandman continued to pay the eftablifhed rent, he retained poffeffion of the farm, which defcended, like property, from father to fon.

THESE accounts given by ancient authors of the condition and tenure of the renters of land in India, agree fo perfectly with what now takes place, that it may be confidered almoft as a defcription of the prefent ftate of its cultivation. In every part of India, where the native Hindoo Princes retain dominion, the *Ryots*, the modern name by which the renters of land are diftinguifhed, hold their poffeffions by a leafe, which may be confidered as perpetual, and at a rate fixed by ancient furveys and valuations. This arrangement has been fo long eftablifhed, and accords fo well with the ideas of the natives, concerning the diftinctions of cafts, and the functions allotted to each, that it has been inviolably maintained in all the provinces fubject either to Mahomedans or Europeans; and, to both, it ferves as the bafis on which their whole fyftem of finance is founded *. In a more remote period, before the original inftitutions of India were fubverted by foreign invaders, the induftry of the hufbandman, on which every member of the community depended for fubfiftence, was as fecure as the tenure by which he held his lands was equitable. Even war did not interrupt his labours or endanger his property. It was not

* See NOTE IV.

uncommon, we are informed, that while two hoſtile armies were fighting a battle in one field, the peaſants were ploughing or reaping in the next field in perfect tranquillity [q]. These maxims and regulations of the ancient legiſlators of India have a near reſemblance to the ſyſtem of thoſe ingenious modern ſpeculators on political œconomy, who repreſent the produce of land as the ſole ſource of wealth in every country; and who conſider the diſcovery of this principle, according to which they contend that the government of nations ſhould be conducted, as one of the greateſt efforts of human wiſdom. Under a form of government, which paid ſuch attention to all the different orders of which the ſociety is compoſed, particularly the cultivators of the earth, it is not wonderful that the ancients ſhould deſcribe the Indians as a moſt happy race of men; and that the moſt intelligent modern obſervers ſhould celebrate the equity, the humanity, and mildneſs of Indian policy. A Hindoo Rajah, as I have been informed by perſons well acquainted with the ſtate of India, reſembles more a father preſiding in a numerous family of his own children, than a ſovereign ruling over inferiors, ſubject to his dominion. He endeavours to ſecure their happineſs with vigilant ſolicitude; they are attached to him with the moſt tender affection and inviolable fidelity. We can hardly conceive men to be placed in any ſtate more favourable to their acquiring all the advantages derived from ſocial union. It is only when the mind is perfectly at eaſe, and neither feels nor dreads oppreſſion, that it employs its active powers in forming numerous arrangements of police,

[q] Strab. lib. xv. p. 1030. A.

for

for ſecuring its enjoyments and increaſing them. Many arrangements of this nature the Greeks, though accuſtomed to their own inſtitutions, the moſt perfect at that time in Europe, obſerved and admired among the Indians, and mention them as inſtances of high civilization and improvement. There were eſtabliſhed among the Indians three diſtinct claſſes of officers, one of which had it in charge to inſpect agriculture, and every kind of country work. They meaſured the portions of land allotted to each renter. They had the cuſtody of the *Tanks*, or public reſervoirs of water, without a regular diſtribution of which, the fields in a torrid climate cannot be rendered fertile. They marked out the courſe of the highways, along which, at certain diſtances, they erected ſtones, to meaſure the road and direct travellers [r]. To officers of a ſecond claſs was committed the inſpection of the police in cities, and their functions, of courſe, were many and various; ſome of which only I ſhall ſpecify. They appropriated houſes for the reception of ſtrangers; they protected them from injury, provided for their ſubſiſtence, and, when ſeized with any diſeaſe, they appointed phyſicians to attend them; and, on the event of their death, they not only buried them with decency, but took charge of their effects, and reſtored them to their relations. They kept exact regiſters of births and of deaths. They viſited the public markets, and examined weights and meaſures. The third claſs of officers ſuperintended the military department; but, as the objects to which their attention was directed are foreign from the ſubject of my

[r] See NOTE V.

inquiries,

inquiries, it is unneceſſary to enter into any detail with reſpect to them*.

As manners and cuſtoms in India deſcend almoſt without variation from age to age, many of the peculiar inſtitutions which I have enumerated ſtill ſubſiſt there. There is ſtill the ſame attention to the conſtruction and preſervation of tanks, and the diſtribution of their waters. The direction of roads, and placing ſtones along them, is ſtill an object of police. *Choultries*, or houſes built for the accommodation of travellers, are frequent in every part of the country, and are uſeful as well as noble monuments of Indian munificence and humanity. It is only among men in the moſt improved ſtate of ſociety, and under the beſt forms of government, that we diſcover inſtitutions ſimilar to thoſe which I have deſcribed; and many nations have advanced far in their progreſs, without eſtabliſhing arrangements of police equally perfect.

III. In eſtimating the progreſs which any nation has made in civilization, the object that merits the greateſt degree of attention, next to its political conſtitution, is the ſpirit of the laws and nature of the forms by which its judicial proceedings are regulated. In the early and rude ages of ſociety, the few diſputes with reſpect to property which ariſe, are terminated by the interpoſition of the old men, or by the authority of the chiefs in every ſmall tribe or community; their deciſions are dictated by their own diſcretion, or founded on plain and

* Strabo, lib. xv. p 1034. A, &c. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 154.

obvious

obvious maxims of equity. But as controversies multiply, cases similar to such as have been formerly determined must recur, and the awards upon these grow gradually into precedents, which serve to regulate future judgments. Thus, long before the nature of property is defined by positive statutes, or any rules prescribed concerning the mode of acquiring or conveying it, there is gradually formed, in every state, a body of customary or common law, by which judicial proceedings are directed, and every decision conformable to it is submitted to with reverence, as the result of the accumulated wisdom and experience of ages.

In this state the administration of justice seems to have been in India when first visited by Europeans. Though the Indians, according to their account, had no written laws, but determined every controverted point, by recollecting what had been formerly decided[t]; they assert, that justice was dispensed among them with great accuracy, and that crimes were most severely punished[u]. But in this general observation is contained all the intelligence which the ancients furnish concerning the nature and forms of judicial proceedings in India. From the time of Megasthenes, no Greek or Roman of any note appears to have resided long enough in the country, or to have been so much acquainted with the customs of the natives, as to be capable of entering into any detail with respect to a point of so much importance in their policy. Fortunately, the defects of their information have been amply supplied by the more

[t] Strabo, lib. xv. 1035. D.

[u] Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 154.

accurate and extenfive refearches of the moderns. During the courfe of almoft three centuries, the number of perfons who have reforted from Europe to India has been great. Many of them, who have remained long in the country, and were perfons of liberal education and enlarged minds, have lived in fuch familiar intercourfe with the natives, and acquired fo competent a knowledge of their languages, as enabled them to obferve their inftitutions with attention, and to defcribe them with fidelity. Refpectable as their authority may be, I fhall not, in what I offer for illuftrating the judicial proceedings of the Hindoos, reft upon it alone, but fhall derive my information from fources higher and more pure.

TOWARDS the middle of the fixteenth century, Akber the fixth, in defcent from Tamerlane, mounted the throne of Indoftan. He is one of the few fovereigns intitled to the appellation both of Great and Good, and the only one of Mahomedan race, whofe mind appears to have rifen fo far above all the illiberal prejudices of that fanatical religion in which he was educated, as to be capable of forming a plan worthy of a monarch who loved his people, and was folicitous to render them happy. As, in every province of his extenfive dominions, the Hindoos formed the great body of his fubjects, he laboured to acquire a perfect knowledge of their religion, their fciences, their laws and inftitutions; in order that he might conduct every part of his government, particularly the adminiftration of juftice, in a manner as much accommodated as poffible to their own ideas [x]. In this generous undertaking he

[x] See NOTE VI.

was ſeconded with zeal by his vizier Abul Fazel, a miniſter whoſe underſtanding was not leſs enlightened than that of his maſter. By their aſſiduous reſearches, and conſultation of learned men [y], ſuch information was obtained as enabled Abul Fazel to publiſh a brief compendium of Hindoo juriſprudence in the Ayeen Akbery [z], which may be conſidered as the firſt genuine communication of its principles to perſons of a different religion. About two centuries afterwards, the illuſtrious example of Akber was imitated and ſurpaſſed by Mr. Haſtings, the Governor General of the Britiſh Settlements in India. By his authority, and under his inſpection, the moſt eminent Pundits, or Brahmins learned in the laws, of the provinces over which he preſided, were aſſembled at Calcutta; and, in the courſe of two years, compiled, from their moſt ancient and approved authors, ſentence by ſentence, without addition or diminution, a full code of Hindoo laws [a]; which is, undoubtedly, the moſt valuable and authentic elucidation of Indian policy and manners that has been hitherto communicated to Europe. A.D. 1773.

According to the Pundits, ſome of the writers upon whoſe authority they found the decrees which they have inſerted in the Code, lived ſeveral millions of years before their time [b]; and they boaſt of having a ſucceſſion of expounders of their laws from that period to the preſent. Without entering into any

[y] Ayeen Akbery, A. vol. iii. p. 95.
[z] Vol. iii. p. 197, &c.
[a] Preface to the Code, p. x.
[b] Ibid. p. xxxviii.

examination of what is ſo extravagant, we may conclude, that the Hindoos have in their poſſeſſion treatiſes concerning the laws and juriſprudence of their country, of more remote antiquity than are to be found in any other nation. The truth of this depends not upon their own teſtimony alone, but it is put beyond doubt by one circumſtance, that all theſe treatiſes are written in the Sanſkreet language, which has not been ſpoken for many ages in any part of Indoſtan, and is now underſtood by none but the moſt learned Brahmins. That the Hindoos were a people highly civilized, at the time when their laws were compoſed, is moſt clearly eſtabliſhed by internal evidence contained in the Code itſelf. Among nations beginning to emerge from barbariſm, the regulations of law are extremely ſimple, and applicable only to a few obvious caſes of daily occurrence. Men muſt have been long united in a ſocial ſtate, their tranſactions muſt have been numerous and complex, and judges muſt have determined an immenſe variety of controverſies to which theſe give riſe, before the ſyſtem of law becomes ſo voluminous and comprehenſive as to direct the judicial proceedings of a nation far advanced in improvement. In that early age of the Roman republic, when the laws of the Twelve Tables were promulgated, nothing more was required than the laconic injunctions which they contain for regulating the deciſions of courts of juſtice; but, in a later period, the body of civil law, ample as its contents are, was found hardly ſufficient for that purpoſe. To the jejune brevity of the Twelve Tables, the Hindoo Code has no reſemblance, but with reſpect to the number and variety of points it conſiders, it will bear a comparifon

parifon with the celebrated digeft of Juftinian; or with the fyftems of jurifprudence in nations moft highly civilized. The articles of which the Hindoo Code is compofed, are arranged in natural and luminous order. They are numerous and comprehenfive, and inveftigated with that minute attention and difcernment which are natural to a people diftinguifhed for acutenefs and fubtility of underftanding, who have been long accuftomed to the accuracy of judicial proceedings, and acquainted with all the refinements of legal practice. The decifions concerning every point (with a few exceptions occafioned by local prejudices and peculiar cuftoms) are founded upon the great and immutable principles of juftice which the human mind acknowledges and refpects, in every age, and in all parts of the earth. Whoever examines the whole work, cannot entertain a doubt of its containing the jurifprudence of an enlightened and commercial people. Whoever looks into any particular title, will be furprifed with a minutenefs of detail and nicety of diftinction, which, in many inftances, feem to go beyond the attention of European legiflation; and it is remarkable that fome of the regulations which indicate the greateft degree of refinement, were eftablifhed in periods of the moft remote antiquity. " In the firft of the facred law tracts, (as is obferved by a perfon " to whom Oriental literature, in all its branches, has been " greatly indebted,) which the Hindoos fuppofe to have been " revealed by Menu fome millions of years ago, there is a " curious paffage on the legal intereft of money, and the " limited rate of it in different cafes, with an exception in re- " gard to adventures at fea; an exception which the fenfe of " mankind approves, and which commerce abfolutely requires,

"though it was not before the reign of Charles I. that our "English jurifprudence fully admitted it in refpect of maritime "contracts [c]." It is likewife worthy of notice, that though the natives of India have been diftinguifhed in every age for the humanity and mildnefs of their difpofition, yet fuch is the folicitude of their law-givers to preferve the order and tranquillity of fociety, that the punifhments which they inflict on criminals, are (agreeably to an obfervation of the ancients already mentioned) extremely rigorous. "Punifhment (according to a ftriking "perfonification in the Hindoo code) is the magiftrate; pu-"nifhment is the infpirer of terror; punifhment is the nou-"rifher of the fubjects; punifhment is the defender from cala-"mity; punifhment is the guardian of thofe that fleep; pu-"nifhment, with a black afpect, and a red eye, terrifies "the guilty [d]."

IV. As the condition of the ancient inhabitants of India, whether we confider them as individuals, or as members of fociety, appears, from the preceding inveftigation, to have been extremely favourable to the cultivation of ufeful and elegant arts; we are naturally led to enquire, whether the progrefs which they actually made in them, was fuch as might have been expected from a people in that fituation. In attempting to trace this progrefs, we have not the benefit of guidance equal to that which conducted our refearches concerning the former articles of enquiry. The ancients, from their flender acquaintance

[c] Sir William Jones's Third Difcourfe, Afiat. Refearch. p. 428.
[d] Code, ch. xxi. § 8.

with

with the interior ftate of India, have been able to communicate little information with refpect to the arts cultivated there; and though the moderns, during their continued intercourfe with India for three centuries, have had accefs to obferve them with greater attention, it is of late only, that by ftudying the languages now and formerly fpoken in India, and by confulting and tranflating their moft eminent authors, they have begun to enter into that path of enquiry which leads with certainty to a thorough knowledge of the ftate of arts cultivated in that country.

ONE of the firft arts which human ingenuity aimed at improving, beyond what mere neceffity requires, was that of building. In the brief remarks which the fubject of my inquiries leads me to make on the progrefs of this art in India, I fhall confine my attention wholly to thofe of higheft antiquity. The moft durable monuments of human induftry are public buildings. The productions of art, formed for the common purpofes of life, wafte and perifh in ufing them; but works deftined for the benefit of pofterity fubfift through ages, and it is according to the manner in which thefe are executed, that we form a judgment with refpect to the degree of power, fkill, and improvement to which the people by whom they were erected had attained. In every part of India monuments of high antiquity are found. Thefe are of two kinds, fuch as were confecrated to the offices of religion, or fortreffes built for the fecurity of the country. In the former of thefe, to which Europeans, whatever their ftructure may be, give the general name of *Pagodas*, we may obferve a diverfity of ftile, which both

both marks the gradual progrefs of architecture, and throws light on the general ftate of arts and manners in different periods. The moft early Pagodas appear to have been nothing more than excavations in mountainous parts of the country, formed probably in imitation of the natural caverns to which the firft inhabitants of the earth retired for fafety during the night, and where they found fhelter from the inclemency of the feafons. The moft celebrated, and, as there is reafon to believe, the moft ancient of all thefe, is the Pagoda in the ifland Elephanta, at no great diftance from Bombay. It has been hewn by the hands of man out of a folid rock, about half way up a high mountain, and formed into a fpacious area, nearly 120 feet fquare. In order to fupport the roof, and the weight of the mountain that lies above it, a number of maffy pillars, and of a form not inelegant, have been cut out of the fame rock, at fuch regular diftances, as on the firft entrance prefents to the eye of the fpectator an appearance both of beauty and of ftrength. Great part of the infide is covered with human figures in high relief, of gigantic fize as well as fingular forms, and diftinguifhed by a variety of fymbols, reprefenting, it is probable, the attributes of the deities whom they worfhipped, or the actions of the heroes whom they admired. In the ifle of Salfette, ftill nearer to Bombay, are excavations in a fimilar ftile, hardly inferior in magnificence, and deftined for the fame religious purpofes.

These ftupendous works are of fuch high antiquity, that as the natives cannot, either from hiftory or tradition, give any information concerning the time in which they were executed, they

they univerſally aſcribe the formation of them to the power of ſuperior beings. From the extent and grandeur of theſe ſubterraneous manſions, which intelligent travellers compare to the moſt celebrated monuments of human power and art in any part of the earth, it is manifeſt that they could not have been formed in that ſtage of ſocial life where men continue divided into ſmall tribes, unaccuſtomed to the efforts of perſevering induſtry. It is only in States of conſiderable extent, and among people long habituated to ſubordination, and to act with concert, that the idea of ſuch magnificent works is conceived, or the power of accompliſhing them can be found.

THAT ſome ſuch powerful ſtate was eſtabliſhed in India at the time when the excavations in the iſlands of Elephanta and Salſette were formed, is not the only concluſion to be drawn from a ſurvey of them; the ſtile in which the ſculptures with which they are adorned is executed, indicates a conſiderable improvement in art at that early period. Sculpture is the imitative art in which man ſeems to have made the firſt trial of his own talents. But even in thoſe countries where it has attained to the higheſt degree of perfection, its progreſs has been extremely ſlow. Whoever has attended to the hiſtory of this art in Greece, knows how far removed the firſt rude eſſay to repreſent the human form, was from any complete delineation of it [e]. But the different groupes of figures which ſtill remain entire in the Pagoda of Elephanta, however low they muſt rank if they be compared with the more elegant works of

[e] Winkelman's Hiſt. de l'Art chez les Anciens, tom. i. p. 32, &c.

 Grecian

Grecian or even Etrufcan artifts, are finifhed in a ftile confiderably fuperior to the hard inexpreffive manner of the Egyptians, or the figures in the celebrated palace of Perfepolis. In this light they have appeared to perfons abundantly qualified to appretiate their merit, and from different drawings, particularly thofe of Niebuhr, a traveller equally accurate in obferving, and faithful in defcribing, we muft form a favourable opinion of the ftate of arts in India at that period.

It is worthy of notice, that although feveral of the figures in the caverns at Elephanta be fo different from thofe now exhibited in the Pagodas as objects of veneration, that fome learned Europeans have imagined they reprefent the rites of a religion more ancient than that now eftablifhed in Indoftan, yet by the Hindoos themfelves the caverns are confidered as hallowed places of their own worfhip, and they ftill refort thither to perform their devotions, and honour the figures there in the fame manner with thofe in their own Pagodas. In confirmation of this, I have been informed by an intelligent perfon, who vifited this fubterraneous fanctuary in the year 1782, that he was accompanied by a fagacious Brahmin, a native of Benares, who, though he had never been in it before that time, was well acquainted with the parentage, education, and life of every deity or human figure there reprefented, and explained with fluency the meaning of the various fymbols by which the images were diftinguifhed. This may be confidered as a clear proof that the fyftem of mythology now prevalent in Benares, is not different from that delineated in the caverns of Elephanta. Mr. Hunter, who vifited Elephanta in the year 1784, feems to confider the figures

figures there as reprefenting deities who are ftill objects of worfhip among the Hindoos [f]. One circumftance ferves to confirm the juftnefs of this opinion. Several of the moft confpicuous perfonages in the groupes at Elephanta are decorated with the *Zennar*, the facred ftring or cord peculiar to the order of Brahmins, an authentic evidence of the diftinction of cafts having been eftablifhed in India at the time when thefe works were finifhed.

2. INSTEAD of caverns, the original places of worfhip, which could be formed only in particular fituations, the devotion of the people foon began to raife temples in honour of their deities in other parts of India. The ftructure of thefe was at firft extremely fimple. They were pyramids of large dimenfion, and had no light within but what came from a fmall door. After having been long accuftomed to perform all the rites of religion in the gloom of caverns, the Indians were naturally led to confider the folemn darknefs of fuch a manfion as facred. Some Pagodas in this firft ftile of building ftill remain in Indoftan. Drawings of two of thefe at Deogur, and of a third near Tanjore in the Carnatic, all fabrics of great antiquity, have been publifhed by Mr. Hodges [g], and though they are rude ftructures, they are of fuch magnitude as muft have required the power of fome confiderable ftate to rear them.

3. IN proportion to the progrefs of the different countries of India in opulence and refinement, the ftructure of their temples

[f] Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 286, &c.

[g] N° VI.

gradually improved. From plain buildings they became highly ornamented fabrics, and, both by their extent and magnificence, are monuments of the power and tafte of the people by whom they were erected. In this highly finifhed ftile there are Pagodas of great antiquity in different parts of Indoftan, particularly in the Southern provinces, which were not expofed to the deftructive violence of Mahomedan zeal [h]. In order to affift my readers in forming fuch an idea of thefe buildings as may enable them to judge with refpect to the early ftate of arts in India, I fhall briefly defcribe two, of which we have the moft accurate accounts. The entry to the Pagoda of Chillambrum, near Porto Novo, on the Coromandel coaft, held in high veneration on account of its antiquity, is by a ftately gate under a pyramid an hundred and twenty-two feet in height, built with large ftones above forty feet long, and more than five feet fquare, and all covered with plates of copper, adorned with an immenfe variety of figures neatly executed. The whole ftructure extends one thoufand three hundred and thirty-two feet in one direction, and nine hundred and thirty-fix in another. Some of the ornamental parts are finifhed with an elegance intitled to the admiration of the moft ingenious artifts [i]. The Pagoda of Seringham, fuperior in fanctity to that of Chillambrum, furpaffes it as much in grandeur; and, fortunately, I can convey a more perfect idea of it by adopting the words of an elegant and accurate hiftorian. This Pagoda is fituated about a mile from the weftern extremity of the ifland of Seringham, formed by the divifion of the great river Caveri into two

[h] See NOTE VII.

[i] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxi. p. 44, &c. Voy. de M. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 217.

channels. "It is composed of seven square inclosures, one
"within the other, the walls of which are twenty-five feet high,
"and four thick. These inclosures are three hundred and fifty feet
"distant from one another, and each has four large gates with a
"high tower; which are placed, one in the middle of each side
"of the inclosure, and opposite to the four cardinal points. The
"outward wall is near four miles in circumference, and its gate-
"way to the South is ornamented with pillars, several of which
"are single stones thirty-three feet long, and nearly five in
"diameter; and those which form the roof are still larger:
"in the inmost inclosures are the chapels. About half a mile
"to the East of Seringham, and nearer to the Caveri than the
"Coleroon, is another large Pagoda, called Jembikisma; but this
"has only one inclosure. The extreme veneration in which
"Seringham is held, arises from a belief that it contains that
"identical image of the god Wistchnu, which used to be
"worshipped by the god Brahma. Pilgrims from all parts of
"the peninsula come here to obtain absolution, and none come
"without an offering of money; and a large part of the reve-
"nue of the island is allotted for the maintenance of the Brah-
"mins who inhabit the Pagoda; and these, with their families,
"formerly composed a multitude not less than forty thousand
"souls, maintained, without labour, by the liberality of su-
"perstition. Here, as in all the other great Pagodas of India,
"the Brahmins live in a subordination which knows no resist-
"ance, and slumber in a voluptuousness which knows no
"wants[k]."

[k] Orme's Hist. of Milit. Transact. of Indostan, vol. i. p. 178.

The other ſpecies of public buildings which I mentioned, were thoſe erected for the defence of the country. From the immenſe plains of Indoſtan there ariſe, in different parts, eminences and rocks formed by nature to be places of ſtrength. Of theſe the natives early took poſſeſſion, and fortifying them with works of various kinds, rendered them almoſt impregnable ſtations. There ſeems to have been in ſome diſtant age, a period of general turbulence and danger in India, when ſuch retreats were deemed eſſentially neceſſary to public ſafety; for among the duties of magiſtrates preſcribed by the Pundits, one is, "that he ſhall erect a ſtrong fort in the place "where he chuſes to reſide; and ſhall build a wall on all the "four ſides of it, with towers and battlements, and ſhall make "a full ditch around it[l]." Of theſe fortreſſes ſeveral remain, which, both from the appearance of the buildings, and from the tradition of the natives, muſt have been conſtructed in very remote times. Mr. Hodges has publiſhed views of three of theſe, one of Chunar Gur, ſituated upon the river Ganges, about ſixteen miles above the city of Benares[m]; the ſecond, of Gwallior, about eighty miles to the ſouth of Agra[n]; the third of Bidjegur, in the territory of Benares[o]. They are all, particularly Gwallior, works of conſiderable magnitude and ſtrength. The fortreſſes in Bengal, however, are not to be compared with ſeveral in the Deccan. Aſſeergur, Burhampour, and Dowlatabad, are deemed by the natives to be impregnable[p]; and I am aſſured, by a good judge, that Aſſeergur is indeed a moſt ſtu-

[l] Introd. to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. cxi.
[m] N° I. [n] N° II. [o] N° III.
[p] Rennel. Mem. p. 133. 139.

pendous

pendous work, and so advantageously situated that it would be extremely difficult to reduce it by force.

Nor is it only from surveying their public works that we are justified in asserting the early proficiency of the Indians in elegant and useful arts: we are led to form the same conclusion by a view of those productions of their ingenuity, which were the chief articles of their trade with foreign nations. Of these the labours of the Indian loom and needle have, in every age, been the most celebrated; and fine linen is conjectured, with some probability, to have been called by the ancients *Sindon*, from the name of the river Indus or Sindus, near which it was wrought in the highest perfection [q]. The cotton manufactures of India seem anciently to have been as much admired as they are at present, not only for their delicate texture, but for the elegance with which some of them are embroidered, and the beautiful colour of the flowers with which others are adorned. From the earliest period of European intercourse with India, that country has been distinguished for the number and excellence of the substances for dying various colours, with which it abounded [r]. The dye of the deep blue colour in highest estimation among the Romans bore the name of *Indicum* [s]. From India too, the substance used in dying a bright red colour, seems to have been imported [t];

[q] Sir William Jones's Third Discourse, p. 428.
[r] Strab. lib. xv. p. 1018 A. 1024 B.
[s] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxv. c. 6. § 27.
[t] Salmasius Exercit. Plinianæ in Solin. 180, &c. 810. Salmasius de Homionymis Hyles Jatrica, c. 107. See NOTE VIII.

and

and it is well known that both in the cotton and ſilk ſtuffs which we now receive from India, the blue and the red are the colours of moſt conſpicuous luſtre and beauty. But however much the ancients may have admired theſe productions of Indian art, ſome circumſtances, which I have already mentioned, rendered their demand for the cotton manufactures of India, far inferior to that of modern times; and this has occaſioned the information concerning them which we receive from the Greek and Roman writers to be very imperfect. We may conclude, however, from the wonderful reſemblance of the ancient ſtate of India to the modern, that, in every period, the productions of their looms were as various as beautiful. The ingenuity of the Indians in other kinds of workmanſhip, particularly in metals and in ivory, is mentioned with praiſe by ancient authors, but without any particular deſcription of their nature [u]. Of theſe early productions of Indian artiſts, there are now ſome ſpecimens in Europe, from which it appears that they were acquainted with the method of engraving upon the hardeſt ſtones and gems; and, both in the elegance of their deſigns and in neatneſs of execution, had arrived at a conſiderable degree of excellence. An ingenious writer maintains, that the art of engraving on gems was probably an Indian invention, and certainly was early improved there, and he ſupports this opinion by ſeveral plauſible arguments [x]. The Indian engraved gems, of which he has publiſhed deſcriptions, appear to be the work-

[u] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1044. B. Dionyſ. Periegies, verſ. 1016.
[x] Raſpe's Introd. to Taſſie's Deſcript. Catal. of engraved Gems, &c. p. xii. &c.

manſhip of a very remote period, as the legends on them are in the Sanſkreet language [y].

But it is not only from the improved ſtate of mechanic arts in India, that we conclude its inhabitants to have been highly civilized; a proof of this, ſtill more convincing, may be deduced from the early and extraordinary productions of their genius in the fine arts. This evidence is rendered more intereſting, by being derived from a ſource of knowledge which the laudable curioſity of our countrymen has opened to the people of Europe within theſe few years. That all the ſcience and literature poſſeſſed by the Brahmins, were contained in books written in a language, underſtood by a few only of the moſt learned among them, is a fact which has long been known; and all the Europeans ſettled in India during three centuries, have complained that the Brahmins obſtinately refuſed to inſtruct any perſon in this language. But at length, by addreſs, mild treatment, and a perſuaſion, that the earneſtneſs with which inſtruction was ſolicited, proceeded not from any intention of turning their religion into deriſion, but from a deſire of acquiring a perfect knowledge of their ſciences and literature, their ſcruples have been overcome. Several Britiſh gentlemen are now completely maſters of the Sanſkreet language. The myſterious veil, formerly deemed impenetrable, is removed; and, in the courſe of five years, the curioſity of the public has been gratified by two publications as ſingular as they were unex-

y Raſpe's Introd. to Taſſie's Deſcript. Catal. of engraved Gems, vol i. p. 74. vol. ii. plate xiii.

pected.

pected. The one is a tranflation, by Mr. Wilkins, of an Epifode from the *Mahabarat*, an Epic poem, in high eftimation among the Hindoos, compofed, according to their account, by Kreefhna Dwypayen Veias, the moft eminent of all their Brahmins, above three thoufand years before the Chriftian æra. The other is *Sacontala*, a dramatic poem, written about a century before the birth of Chrift, tranflated by Sir William Jones. I fhall endeavour to give my readers fuch a view of the fubject and compofition of each of thefe, as may enable them to eftimate the degree of merit which they poffefs.

The Mahabarat is a voluminous poem, confifting of upwards of four hundred thoufand lines. Mr. Wilkins has tranflated more than a third of it; but only a fhort epifode, intitled Baghvat-Geeta, is hitherto publifhed, and from this fpecimen we muft form an opinion with refpect to the whole. The fubject of the poem is a famous civil war between two branches of the royal houfe of Bhaurat. When the forces on each fide were formed in the field, and ready to decide the conteft by the fword, Arjoon, the favourite and pupil of the god Kreefhna, who accompanied him in this hour of danger, requefted of him to caufe his chariot advance between the two hoftile armies. He looked at both armies, and beheld, on either fide, none but grandfires, uncles, coufins, tutors, fons, and brothers, near relations or bofom friends; and when he had gazed for a while, and faw thefe prepared for the fight, he was feized with extreme pity and compunction, and uttered his forrow in the following words:—"Having beheld, O *Kreefhna!* my kindred

" thus waiting anxious for the fight, my members fail me, " my countenance withereth, the hair ſtandeth an end upon my " body, and all my frame trembleth with horror! Even *Gan-* " *deev*, my bow, eſcapeth from my hand, and my ſkin is parched " and dried up.—When I have deſtroyed my kindred, ſhall I " longer look for happineſs? I wiſh not for victory, *Kreeſhna;* " I want not dominion; I want not pleaſure; for what is do- " minion and the enjoyments of life, or even life itſelf, when " thoſe for whom dominion, pleaſure, and enjoyment were to " be coveted, have abandoned life and fortune, and ſtand here " in the field ready for the battle. Tutors, ſons, and fathers, " grandſires and grandſons, uncles, nephews, couſins, kindred, " and friends! Although they would kill me, I wiſh not to " fight them; no not even for the dominion of the three re- " gions of the univerſe, much leſs for this little earth [a]." In order to remove his ſcruples, Kreeſhna informs him what was the duty of a prince of the Chehteree, or military caſt, when called to act in ſuch a ſituation, and incites him to perform it by a variety of moral and philoſophical arguments, the nature of which I ſhall have occaſion to conſider particularly in another part of this Diſſertation. In this dialogue between Kreeſhna and his pupil, there are ſeveral paſſages which give an high idea of the genius of the poet. The ſpeech of Arjoon I have quoted, in which he expreſſes the anguiſh of his ſoul, muſt have ſtruck every reader as beautiful and pathetic; and I ſhall afterwards produce a deſcription of the Supreme Being, and of the reverence wherewith he ſhould be worſhipped, which is ſublime. But while theſe ex-

[a] Baghvat Geeta, p. 30, 31.

cite our admiration, and confirm us in the belief of a high degree of civilization in that country where ſuch a work was produced, we are ſurpriſed at the defect of taſte and of art in the manner of introducing this Epiſode. Two powerful armies are drawn up in battle-array, eager for the fight; a young hero and his inſtructor are deſcribed as ſtanding in a chariot of war between them; that ſurely was not the moment for teaching him the principles of philoſophy, and delivering eighteen lectures of metaphyſics and theology.

With regard, however, both to the dramatic and epic poetry of the Hindoos, we labour under the diſadvantage of being obliged to form an opinion from a ſingle ſpecimen of each, and that of the latter, too, (as it is only a part of a large work,) an imperfect one. But if, from ſuch ſcanty materials, we may venture upon any deciſion, it muſt be, that of the two, the drama ſeems to have been conducted with the moſt correct taſte. This will appear from the obſervations which I now proceed to make upon Sacontala.

It is only to nations conſiderably advanced in refinement, that the drama is a favourite entertainment. The Greeks had been for a good time a poliſhed people; Alcæus and Sappho had compoſed their Odes, and Thales and Anaximander had opened their ſchools, before Tragedy made its firſt rude eſſay in the cart of Theſpis; and a good time elapſed before it attained to any conſiderable degree of excellence. From the drama of Sacontala, then, we muſt form an advantageous idea of the ſtate of improvement in that ſociety to whoſe taſte it was ſuited. In eſtimating its merit, however,

however, we muſt not apply to it rules of criticiſm drawn from the literature and taſte of nations with which its author was altogether unacquainted; we muſt not expect the unities of the Greek theatre; we muſt not meaſure it by our own ſtandard of propriety. Allowance muſt be made for local cuſtoms, and ſingular manners, ariſing from a ſtate of domeſtic ſociety, an order of civil policy, and a ſyſtem of religious opinions, very different from thoſe eſtabliſhed in Europe. Sacontala is not a regular drama, but, like ſome of the plays early exhibited on the Spaniſh and Engliſh theatres, is an hiſtory in dialogue, unfolding events which happened in different places, and during a ſeries of years. When viewed in this light, the fable is in general well arranged, the incidents are happily choſen, and the viciſſitudes in the ſituation of the principal perſonages are ſudden and unexpected. The unravelling of the piece, however, though ſome of the circumſtances preparatory to it be introduced with ſkill, is at laſt brought about by the intervention of ſuperior beings, which has always a bad effect, and diſcovers ſome want of art. But as Sacontala was deſcended of a celeſtial nymph, and under the protection of a holy hermit, this heavenly interpoſition may appear leſs marvellous, and is extremely agreeable to the Oriental taſte. In many places of this drama it is ſimple and tender, in ſome pathetic; in others there is a mixture of comic with what is more ſerious. Of each, examples might be given. I ſhall ſelect a few of the firſt, both becauſe ſimplicity and tenderneſs are the characteriſtic beauties of the piece, and becauſe they ſo little reſemble the extravagant imagery and turgid ſtyle of Oriental poetry.

SACONTALA, the heroine of the drama, a princefs of high birth, had been educated by an holy hermit in a hallowed grove, and had paffed the early part of her life in rural occupations and paftoral innocence. When fhe was about to quit this beloved retreat, and repair to the court of a great monarch, to whom fhe had been married, Cana, her fofter-father, and her youthful companions, thus bewail their own lofs, and exprefs their wifhes for her happinefs, in a ftrain of fentiment and language perfectly fuited to their paftoral character.

" HEAR, O ye trees of this hallowed foreft, hear and proclaim " that Sacontala is going to the palace of her wedded lord; " fhe, who drank not, though thirfty, before you were wa- " tered; fhe, who cropped not, through affection for you, " one of your frefh leaves, though fhe would have been " pleafed with fuch an ornament for her locks; fhe, whofe " chief delight was in the feafon when your branches are " fpangled with flowers!"

CHORUS of Wood Nymphs.—" May her way be attended " with profperity! May propitious breezes fprinkle, for her " delight, the odoriferous duft of rich bloffoms. May pools " of clear water, green with the leaves of the lotos, refrefh " her as fhe walks; and may fhady branches be her defence " from the fcorching fun-beams!"

SACONTALA, juft as fhe was departing from the grove, turns to Cana: " Suffer me, venerable father! to addrefs " this Madhavi-creeper, whofe red bloffoms inflame the grove."

—Cana.

——Cana. "My child I know thy affection for it."——Sacont. "O most radiant of shining plants, receive my embraces, and "return them with thy flexible arms! from this day, though "removed at a fatal distance, I shall for ever be thine.—O "beloved father, consider this creeper as myself!" As she advances, she again addresses Cana: "Father! when yon "female antelope, who now moves slowly from the weight of "the young ones with which she is pregnant, shall be deli- "vered of them, send me, I beg, a kind message with tidings "of her safety.—Do not forget."——Cana. "My beloved! "I will not forget it."——Sacont. [*stopping.*] "Ah! what is "it that clings to the skirts of my robe, and detains me?"—— Cana. "It is thy adopted child, the little fawn, whose mouth, "when the sharp points of Cusa grass had wounded it, has "been so often smeared by thee with the healing oil of Ingudi; "who has been so often fed by thee with a handful of Synmaka "grains, and now will not leave the footsteps of his protectress." ——Sacont. "Why dost thou weep, tender fawn, for me who "must leave our common dwelling-place?—As thou wast "reared by me when thou hadst lost thy mother, who died "soon after thy birth, so will my foster-father attend thee, "when we are separated, with anxious care.—Return, poor "thing, return——we must part." [*She bursts into tears.*] ——Cana. "Thy tears, my child, ill suit the occasion, we shall "all meet again; be firm; see the direct road before thee, "and follow it. When the big tear lurks beneath thy beau- "tiful eye-lashes, let thy resolution check its first efforts to "disengage itself.—In thy passage over this earth, where "the paths are now high, now low, and the true path sel-

" dom diſtinguiſhed, the traces of thy feet muſt needs be un-" equal; but virtue will preſs thee right onward [b]."

From this ſpecimen of the Indian drama, every reader of good taſte, I ſhould imagine, will be ſatisfied, that it is only among a people of poliſhed manners and delicate ſentiments that a compoſition ſo ſimple and correct could be produced or reliſhed. I obſerve one inſtance in this drama of that wild extravagance ſo frequent in Oriental poetry. The monarch, in replacing a bracelet which had dropped from the arm of Sacontala, thus addreſſes her: " Look, my darling, this is the " new moon which left the firmament in honour of ſuperior " beauty, and having deſcended on your enchanting wriſt, " hath joined both its horns round it in the ſhape of a " bracelet [c]." But this is the ſpeech of an enraptured young man to his miſtreſs, and in every age and nation exaggerated praiſe is expected from the mouth of lovers. Dramatic exhibitions ſeem to have been a favourite amuſement of the Hindoos as well as of other civilized nations. " The " tragedies, comedies, farces, and muſical pieces of the In-" dian theatre, would fill as many volumes as that of any " nation in ancient or modern Europe. They are all in verſe " where the dialogue is elevated, and in proſe where it is " familiar; the men of rank and learning are repreſented " ſpeaking pure Sanſcrit, and the women Pracrit, which is " little more than the language of the Brahmins, melted down " by a delicate articulation to the ſoftneſs of Italian; while the

[b] Act IV. p. 47, &c.

[c] Act III. p. 36.

6 " low

" low perſons of the drama ſpeak the vulgar dialects of the " ſeveral provinces which they are ſuppoſed to inhabit [d]."

V. The attainments of the Indians in ſcience, furniſh an additional proof of their early civilization. By every perſon who has viſited India in ancient or modern times, its inhabitants, either in tranſactions of private buſineſs, or in the conduct of political affairs, have been deemed not inferior to the people of any nation in ſagacity, acuteneſs of underſtanding, or addreſs. From the application of ſuch talents to the cultivation of ſcience, an extraordinary degree of proficiency might have been expected. The Indians were, accordingly, early celebrated on that account, and ſome of the moſt eminent of the Greek philoſophers travelled into India, that, by converſing with the ſages of that country, they might acquire ſome portion of the knowledge for which they were diſtinguiſhed [e]. The accounts, however, which we receive from the Greeks and Romans, of the ſciences which attracted the attention of the Indian philoſophers, or of the diſcoveries which they had made in them, are very imperfect. To the reſearches of a few intelligent perſons, who have viſited India during the courſe of the three laſt centuries, we are indebted for more ample and authentic information. But from the reluctance with which the Brahmins communicate their ſciences to ſtrangers, and the inability of Europeans to acquire much knowledge of them, while, like the myſteries of their religion, they were concealed from vul-

[d] Preface to Sacont. by Sir William Jones, p. ix. See NOTE IX.
[e] Bruckeri Hiſt. Philoſoph. vol. i. p. 190.

gar eyes in an unknown tongue, this information was acquired ſlowly and with great difficulty. The ſame obſervation, however, which I made concerning our knowledge of the ſtate of the fine arts among the people of India, is applicable to that of their progreſs in ſcience, and the preſent age is the firſt furniſhed with ſufficient evidence upon which to found a deciſive judgment with reſpect to either.

SCIENCE, when viewed as disjoined from religion, the conſideration of which I reſerve for another head, is employed in contemplating either the operations of the underſtanding, the exerciſe of our moral powers, or the nature and qualities of external objects. The firſt is denominated logic; the ſecond ethics; the third phyſics, or the knowledge of nature. With reſpect to the early progreſs in cultivating each of theſe ſciences in India, we are in poſſeſſion of facts which merit attention.

BUT, prior to the conſideration of them, it is proper to examine the ideas of the Brahmins with reſpect to mind itſelf, for if theſe were not juſt, all their theories concerning its operations muſt have been erroneous and fanciful. The diſtinction between matter and ſpirit appears to have been early known by the philoſophers of India, and to the latter they aſcribed many powers, of which they deemed the former to be incapable; and when we recollect how inadequate our conceptions are of every object that does not fall under the cognizance of the ſenſes, we may affirm (if allowance be made for a peculiar notion of the Hindoos which ſhall be afterwards explained) that no deſcription of the human ſoul is more ſuited to the dignity of

of its nature than that given by the author of the Mahabarat. "Some," ſays he, "regard the ſoul as a wonder, others hear "of it with aſtoniſhment, but no one knoweth it. The wea-"pon divideth it not; the fire burneth it not; the water cor-"rupteth it not; the wind drieth it not away; for it is indi-"viſible, inconſumable, incorruptible; it is eternal, univerſal, "permanent, immovable; it is inviſible, inconceivable, and "unalterable[f]." After this view of the ſentiments of the Brahmins concerning mind itſelf, we may proceed to conſider their ideas with reſpect to each of the ſciences, in that tripartite arrangement which I mentioned.

1ſt, LOGIC and Metaphyſics. On no ſubject has the human underſtanding been more exerciſed than in analyſing its own operations. The various powers of the mind have been examined and defined. The origin and progreſs of our ideas have been traced; and proper rules have been preſcribed, of proceeding from the obſervation of facts to the eſtabliſhment of principles, or from the knowledge of principles to form arrangements of ſcience. The philoſophers of ancient Greece were highly celebrated for their proficiency in theſe abſtruſe ſpeculations; and, in their diſcuſſions and arrangements, diſcovered ſuch depth of thought, and acuteneſs of diſcernment, that their ſyſtems of Logic, particularly that of the Peripatetick School, have been deemed moſt diſtinguiſhed efforts of human reaſon.

[f] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 37.

But since we became acquainted, in some degree, with the literature and science of the Hindoos, we find that as soon as men arrive at that stage in social life, when they can turn their attention to speculative inquiries, the human mind will, in every region of the earth, display nearly the same powers, and proceed in its investigations and discoveries by nearly similar steps. From Abul Fazel's compendium of the philosophy [g] of the Hindoos, the knowledge of which he acquired, as he informs us, by associating intimately with the most learned men of the nation; from the specimen of their logical discussions contained in that portion of the Shaster published by Colonel Dow [h], and from many passages in the Baghvat-Geeta, it appears that the same speculations which occupied the philosophers of Greece had engaged the attention of the Indian Brahmins; and the theories of the former, either concerning the qualities of external objects, or the nature of our own ideas, were not more ingenious than those of the latter. To define with accuracy, to distinguish with acuteness, and to reason with subtlety, are characteristics of both; and in both, the same excess of refinement, in attempting to analyse those operations of mind which the faculties of man were not formed to comprehend, led sometimes to the most false and dangerous conclusions. That sceptical philosophy, which denies the existence of the material world, and asserts nothing to be real but our own ideas, seems to have been known in India as well as in Europe [i]; and the sages of the East, as they were indebted to philosophy for the

[g] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 95, &c. [h] Dissertation, p. xxxix, &c.
[i] Dow's Dissertation, p. lvii. Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 128.

knowledge of many important truths, were not more exempt than those of the West from its delusions and errors.

2d, Ethics. This science, which has for its object, to ascertain what distinguishes virtue from vice, to investigate what motives should prompt men to act, and to prescribe rules for the conduct of life, as it is of all other the most interesting, seems to have deeply engaged the attention of the Brahmins. Their sentiments with respect to these points were various, and, like the philosophers of Greece, the Brahmins were divided into sects, distinguished by maxims and tenets often diametrically opposite. That sect with whose opinions we are, fortunately, best acquainted, had established a system of morals, founded on principles the most generous and dignified which unassisted reason is capable of discovering. Man, they taught, was formed, not for speculation or indolence, but for action. He is born, not for himself alone, but for his fellow men. The happiness of the society of which he is a member, the good of mankind, are his ultimate and highest objects. In chusing what to prefer or to reject, the justness and propriety of his choice are the only considerations to which he should attend. The events which may follow his actions are not in his own power, and whether they be prosperous or adverse, as long as he is satisfied with the purity of the motives which induced him to act, he can enjoy that approbation of his own mind, which constitutes genuine happiness, independent of the power of fortune or the opinions of other men. "Man (says the author of the Mahabarat) "enjoyeth not freedom from action. Every man is involuntarily urged to act by those principles which are inherent in

"his nature. He who reftraineth his active faculties, and fitteth down with his mind attentive to the objects of his fenfes, may be called one of an aftrayed foul. The man is praifed, who having fubdued all his paffions, performeth with his active faculties all the functions of life unconcerned about the event[k]. Let the motive be in the deed, and not in the event. Be not one whofe motive for action is the hope of reward. Let not thy life be fpent in inaction. Depend upon application, perform thy duty, abandon all thought of the confequence, and make the event equal, whether it terminate in good or in evil; for fuch an equality is called *Yog* [i. e. attention to what is fpiritual]. Seek an afylum then in wifdom alone; for the miferable and unhappy are fo on account of the event of things. Men who are endued with true wifdom are unmindful of good or evil in this world. Study then to obtain this application of thy underftanding, for fuch application in bufinefs is a precious art. Wife men who have abandoned all thought of the fruit which is produced from their actions, are freed from the chains of birth; and go to the regions of eternal happinefs[l]."

FROM thefe, and other paffages which I might have quoted, we learn that the diftinguifhing doctrines of the Stoical School were taught in India many ages before the birth of Zeno, and inculcated with a perfuafive earneftnefs nearly refembling that of Epictetus; and it is not without aftonifhment that we find the tenets of this manly active philofophy, which feem to be

[k] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 44. [l] Ibid. p. 40.

formed

formed only for men of the moſt vigorous ſpirit, preſcribed as the rule of conduct to a race of people more eminent for the gentleneſs of their diſpoſition than for the elevation of their minds.

3d, PHYSICS. In all the ſciences which contribute towards extending our knowledge of nature, in mathematics, mechanics, and aſtronomy, Arithmetic is of elementary uſe. In whatever country then we find that ſuch attention has been paid to the improvement of arithmetic as to render its operations moſt eaſy and correct, we may preſume that the ſciences depending upon it have attained a ſuperior degree of perfection. Such improvement of this ſcience we find in India. While, among the Greeks and Romans, the only method uſed for the notation of numbers was by the letters of the alphabet, which neceſſarily rendered arithmetical calculation extremely tedious and operoſe, the Indians had, from time immemorial, employed for the ſame purpoſe the ten cyphers, or figures, now univerſally known, and by means of them performed every operation in arithmetic with the greateſt facility and expedition. By the happy invention of giving a different value to each figure according to its change of place, no more than ten figures are needed in calculations the moſt complex, and of any given extent; and arithmetic is the moſt perfect of all the ſciences. The Arabians, not long after their ſettlement in Spain, introduced this mode of notation into Europe, and were candid enough to acknowledge that they had derived the knowledge of it from the Indians. Though the advantages of this mode of notation are obvious and great, yet ſo ſlowly do mankind

adopt new inventions, that the uſe of it was for ſome time confined to ſcience; by degrees, however, men of buſineſs relinquiſhed the former cumberſome method of computation by letters, and the Indian arithmetic came into general uſe throughout Europe [m]. It is now ſo familiar and ſimple, that the ingenuity of the people, to whom we are indebted for the invention, is leſs obſerved and leſs celebrated than it merits.

The Aſtronomy of the Indians is a proof ſtill more conſpicuous of their extraordinary progreſs in ſcience. The attention and ſucceſs with which they ſtudied the motions of the heavenly bodies were ſo little known to the Greeks and Romans that it is hardly mentioned by them but in the moſt curſory manner [n]. But as ſoon as the Mahomedans eſtabliſhed an intercourſe with the natives of India, they obſerved and celebrated the ſuperiority of their aſtronomical knowledge. Of the Europeans who viſited India after the communication with it by the Cape of Good Hope was diſcovered, M. Bernier, an inquiſitive and philoſophical traveller, was one of the firſt who learned that the Indians had long applied to the ſtudy of aſtronomy, and had made conſiderable progreſs in that ſcience [o]. His information, however, ſeems to have been very general and imperfect. We are indebted for the firſt ſcientific proof of the great proficiency of the Indians in aſtronomical knowledge, to M. de la Loubere, who, on his return from his embaſſy to Siam,

[m] Montucla Hiſt. des Mathemat. tom. i. p. 360, &c.
[n] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1047 A. Dion. Perieg. v. 1173.
[o] Voyages, tom. ii. p. 145, &c.

brought

brought with him an extract from a Siamese manuscript, which A.D. 1687.
contained tables and rules for calculating the places of the sun and moon. The manner in which these tables were constructed rendered the principles on which they were founded extremely obscure, and it required a commentator as conversant in astronomical calculation as the celebrated Cassini, to explain the meaning of this curious fragment. The epoch of the Siamese tables corresponds to the 21st of March, A. D. 638. Another set of tables was transmitted from Chrisnabouram, in the Carnatic, the epoch of which answers to the 10th of March, A. D. 1491. A third set of tables came from Narsapour, and the epoch of them goes no farther back than A. D. 1569. The fourth and most curious set of tables was published by M. le Gentil, to whom they were communicated by a learned Brahmin of Tirvalore, a small town on the Coromandel coast, about twelve miles west of Negapatam. The epoch of these tables is of high antiquity, and coincides with the beginning of the celebrated æra of the Calyougham or Collee Jogue, which commenced, according to the Indian account, three thousand one hundred and two years before the birth of Christ[p].

These four sets of tables have been examined and compared by M. Bailly, who with singular felicity of genius has conjoined an uncommon degree of eloquence with the patient researches of an astronomer, and the profound investigations of a geometrician. His calculations have been verified, and his reasonings have been illustrated and extended by Mr. Playfair,

[p] See NOTE X.

in

in a very maſterly Diſſertation, publiſhed in the Tranſactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh[q].

INSTEAD of attempting to follow them in reaſonings and calculations, which, from their nature, are often abſtruſe and intricate, I ſhall ſatisfy myſelf with giving ſuch a general view of them as is ſuited to a popular work. This, I hope, may convey a proper idea of what has been publiſhed concerning the aſtronomy of India, a ſubject too curious and important to be omitted in any account of the ſtate of ſcience in that country; and, without interpoſing any judgment of my own, I ſhall leave each of my readers to form his own opinion.

IT may be conſidered as the general reſult of all the inquiries, reaſonings, and calculations, with reſpect to Indian aſtronomy, which have hitherto been made public, "That the "motion of the heavenly bodies, and more particularly their "ſituation at the commencement of the different epochs to "which the four ſets of tables refer, are aſcertained with "great accuracy; and that many of the elements of their cal-"culations, eſpecially for very remote ages, are verified by an "aſtoniſhing coincidence with the tables of the modern aſtro-"nomy of Europe, when improved by the lateſt and moſt nice "deductions from the theory of gravitation." Theſe concluſions are rendered peculiarly intereſting, by the evidence which they afford of an advancement in ſcience unexampled in the hiſtory

[q] Vol. ii. p. 135.

of

of rude nations. The Indian Brahmins, who annually circulate a kind of almanack, containing aſtronomical predictions of ſome of the more remarkable phenomena in the heavens, ſuch as the new and full moons, the eclipſes of the ſun and moon, are in poſſeſſion of certain methods of calculation, which, upon examination, are found to involve in them a very extenſive ſyſtem of aſtronomical knowledge. M. le Gentil, a French aſtronomer, had an opportunity, while in India, of obſerving two eclipſes of the moon, which had been calculated by a Brahmin, and he found the error in either to be very inconſiderable.

THE accuracy of theſe reſults is leſs ſurpriſing than the juſtneſs and ſcientific nature of the principles on which the tables, by which they calculate, are conſtructed. For the method of predicting eclipſes which is followed by the Brahmins, is of a kind altogether different from any that has been found in the poſſeſſion of rude nations in the infancy of aſtronomy. In Chaldæa, and even in Greece, in the early ages, the method of calculating eclipſes was founded on the obſervation of a certain period or cycle, after which the eclipſes of the ſun and moon return nearly in the ſame order; but there was no attempt to analyſe the different circumſtances on which the eclipſe depends, or to deduce its phenomena from a preciſe knowledge of the motions of the ſun and moon. This laſt was reſerved for a more advanced period, when geometry, as well as arithmetic, were called in to the aſſiſtance of aſtronomy, and if it was attempted at all, ſeems not to have been attempted with ſucceſs before the age of Hipparchus. It is a method of

this ſuperior kind, founded on principles, and on an analyſis of the motions of the ſun and moon, which guides the calculations of the Brahmins, and they never employ any of the groſſer eſtimations, which were the pride of the firſt aſtronomers in Egypt and Chaldæa.

THE Brahmins of the preſent times are guided in their calculations by theſe principles, though they do not now underſtand them; they know only the uſe of the tables which are in their poſſeſſion, but are unacquainted with the method of their conſtruction. The Brahmin who viſited M. le Gentil at Pondicherry, and inſtructed him in the uſe of the Indian tables, had no knowledge of the principles of his art, and diſcovered no curioſity concerning the nature of M. le Gentil's obſervations, or about the inſtruments which he employed. He was equally ignorant with reſpect to the authors of theſe tables; and whatever is to be learnt concerning the time or place of their conſtruction, muſt be deduced from the tables themſelves. One ſet of theſe tables (as was formerly obſerved) profeſs to be as old as the beginning of the Calyougham, or to go back to the year 3102 before the Chriſtian æra; but as nothing (it may be ſuppoſed) is eaſier than for an aſtronomer to give to his tables what date he pleaſes, and, by calculating backwards, to eſtabliſh an epoch of any aſſigned antiquity, the pretenſions of the Indian aſtronomy to ſo remote an origin are not to be admitted without examination.

THAT examination has accordingly been inſtituted by M. Bailly, and the reſult of his inquiries is aſſerted to be, that the aſtronomy

nomy of India is founded on obſervations which cannot be of a much later date than the period above mentioned. For the Indian tables repreſent the ſtate of the heavens at that period with aſtoniſhing exactneſs; and there is between them and the calculations of our modern aſtronomy ſuch a conformity, with reſpect to thoſe ages, as could reſult from nothing, but from the authors of the former having accurately copied from nature, and having delineated truly the face of the heavens, in the age wherein they lived. In order to give ſome idea of the high degree of accuracy in the Indian tables, I ſhall ſelect a few inſtances of it, out of many that might be produced. The place of the ſun for the aſtronomical epoch at the beginning of the Calyougham, as ſtated in the tables of Tirvalore, is only forty-ſeven minutes greater than by the tables of M. de la Caille, when corrected by the calculations of M. de la Grange. The place of the moon, in the ſame tables, for the ſame epoch, is only thirty-ſeven minutes different from the tables of Mayer. The tables of Ptolemy, for that epoch, are erroneous no leſs than ten degrees with reſpect to the place of the ſun, and eleven degrees with reſpect to that of the moon. The acceleration of the moon's motion, reckoning from the beginning of the Calyougham to the preſent time, agrees, in the Indian tables, with thoſe of Mayer to a ſingle minute. The inequality of the ſun's motion, and the obliquity of the ecliptic, which were both greater in former ages than they are now, as repreſented in the tables of Tirvalore, are almoſt of the preciſe quantity that the theory of gravitation aſſigns to them three thouſand years before the Chriſtian æra. It is accordingly for thoſe very remote ages (about 5000 years diſtant from the

 preſent)

present) that their aſtronomy is moſt accurate, and the nearer we come down to our own times, the conformity of its reſults with ours diminiſhes. It ſeems reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the time when its rules are moſt accurate, is the time when the obſervations were made on which theſe rules are founded.

In ſupport of this concluſion, M. Bailly maintains that none of all the aſtronomical ſyſtems of Greece or Perſia, or of Tartary, from ſome of which it might be ſuſpected that the Indian tables were copied, can be made to agree with them, eſpecially when we calculate for very remote ages. The ſuperior perfection of the Indian tables becomes always more conſpicuous as we go farther back into antiquity. This ſhews, likewiſe, how difficult it is to conſtruct any aſtronomical tables, which will agree with the ſtate of the heavens for a period ſo remote from the time when the tables were conſtructed, as four or five thouſand years. It is only from aſtronomy in its moſt advanced ſtate, ſuch as it has attained in modern Europe, that ſuch accuracy is to be expected.

When an eſtimate is endeavoured to be made of the geometrical ſkill neceſſary for the conſtruction of the Indian tables and rules, it is found to be very conſiderable; and, beſide the knowledge of elementary geometry, it muſt have required plain and ſpherical trigonometry, or ſomething equivalent to them, together with certain methods of approximating to the values of geometrical magnitudes, which ſeem to riſe very far above the elements of any of thoſe ſciences. Some of theſe laſt mark alſo very clearly (although this has not been obſerved by M. Bailly)

Bailly) that the places to which these tables are adapted, must be situated between the Tropics, because they are altogether inapplicable at a greater distance from the Equator.

FROM this long induction, the conclusion which seems obviously to result is, that the Indian astronomy is founded upon observations which were made at a very early period; and when we consider the exact agreement of the places which they assign to the sun and moon, and other heavenly bodies, at that epoch, with those deduced from the tables of De la Caille and Mayer, it strongly confirms the truth of the position which I have been endeavouring to establish, concerning the early and high state of civilization in India.

BEFORE I quit this subject, there is one circumstance which merits particular attention. All the knowledge which we have hitherto acquired of the principles and conclusions of Indian astronomy is derived from the southern part of the Carnatic, and the tables are adapted to places situated between the meridian of Cape Comorin and that which passes through the eastern part of Ceylon [r]. The Brahmins in the Carnatic acknowledge that their science of astronomy was derived from the North, and that their method of calculation is denominated *Fakiam*, or New, to distinguish it from the *Siddantam*, or ancient method established at Benares, which they allow to be much more perfect; and we learn from Abul Fazel, that all the astronomers of Indostan rely entirely upon the precepts contained

[r] Bailly, Disc. Prelim. p. xvii.

tained in a book called *Soorej Sudhant*, composed in a very remote period [s]. It is manifestly from this book that the method to which the Brahmins of the South gave the name of Siddantam is taken. Benares has been from time immemorial the Athens of India, the residence of the most learned Brahmins, and the seat both of science and literature. There, it is highly probable, whatever remains of the ancient astronomical knowledge and discoveries of the Brahmins is still preserved [t]. In an enlightened age and nation, and during a reign distinguished by a succession of the most splendid and successful undertakings to extend the knowledge of nature, it is an object worthy of public attention, to take measures for obtaining possession of all that time has spared of the philosophy and inventions of the most early and most highly civilized people of the East. It is with peculiar advantages Great Britain may engage in this laudable undertaking. Benares is subject to its dominion; the confidence of the Brahmins has been so far gained as to render them communicative; some of our countrymen are acquainted with that sacred language in which the mysteries both of religion and of science are recorded; movement and activity has been given to a spirit of inquiry throughout all the British establishments in India; persons who visited that country with other views, though engaged in occupations of a very different kind, are now carrying on scientific and literary researches with ardour and success. Nothing seems now to be wanting but that those entrusted with the administration of the British empire in

[s] Ayeen Akbery, iii. p. 8.

[t] M. Bernier, in the year 1668, saw a large hall in Benarés filled with the works of the Indian philosophers, physicians, and poets. Voy. ii. p. 148.

India, ſhould enable ſome perſon, capable, by his talents and liberality of ſentiment, of inveſtigating and explaining the more abſtruſe parts of Indian philoſophy, to devote his whole time to that important object. Thus Great Britain may have the glory of exploring fully that extenſive field of unknown ſcience, which the Academicians of France had the merit of firſt opening to the people of Europe [u].

VI. The laſt evidence which I ſhall mention of the early and high civilization of the ancient Indians, is deduced from the conſideration of their religious tenets and practices. The inſtitutions of religion, publicly eſtabliſhed in all the extenſive countries ſtretching from the Banks of the Indus to Cape Comorin, preſent to view an aſpect nearly ſimilar. They form a regular and complete ſyſtem of ſuperſtition, ſtrengthened and upheld by every thing which can excite the reverence and ſecure the attachment of the people. The temples, conſecrated to their deities, are magnificent, and adorned not only with rich offerings, but with the moſt exquiſite works in painting and ſculpture, which the artiſts, higheſt in eſtimation among them, were capable of executing. The rites and ceremonies of their worſhip are pompous and ſplendid, and the performance of them not only mingles in all the tranſactions of common life, but conſtitutes an eſſential part of them. The Brahmins, who, as miniſters of religion, preſide in all its functions, are elevated above every other order of men, by an origin deemed not only more noble, but acknowledged to be ſacred. They have eſtabliſhed among themſelves a regular hierarchy and gradation of ranks, which, by ſecuring ſubordination in their own order,

[u] See NOTE XI.

adds

adds weight to their authority, and gives them a more abſolute dominion over the minds of the people. This dominion they ſupport by the command of the immenſe revenues with which the liberality of princes, and the zeal of pilgrims and devotees, have enriched their Pagodas [u].

It is far from my intention to enter into any minute detail with reſpect to this vaſt and complicated ſyſtem of ſuperſtition. An attempt to enumerate the multitude of deities which are the objects of adoration in India; to deſcribe the ſplendour of worſhip in their Pagodas, and the immenſe variety of their rites and ceremonies; to recount the various attributes and functions which the craft of prieſts, or the credulity of the people, have aſcribed to their divinities; eſpecially if I were to accompany all this with a review of the numerous and often fanciful ſpeculations and theories of learned men on this ſubject, would require a work of great magnitude. I ſhall, therefore, on this, as on ſome of the former heads, confine myſelf to the preciſe point which I have kept uniformly in view, and by conſidering the ſtate of religion in India, I ſhall endeavour not only to throw additional light on the ſtate of civilization in that country, but I flatter myſelf that, at the ſame time, I ſhall be able to give what may be conſidered as a ſketch and outline of the hiſtory and progreſs of ſuperſtition and falſe religion in every region of the earth.

I. We may obſerve, that, in every country, the received mythology, or ſyſtem of ſuperſtitious belief, with all the rites

[u] Roger. Porte Ouverte, p. 39. 209, &c.

and ceremonies which it prefcribes is formed in the infancy of fociety, in rude and barbarous times. True religion is as different from fuperftition in its origin, as in its nature. The former is the offspring of reafon cherifhed by fcience, and attains to its higheft perfection in ages of light and improvement. Ignorance and fear give birth to the latter, and it is always in the darkeft periods that it acquires the greateft vigour. That numerous part of the human fpecies whofe lot is labour, whofe principal and almoft fole occupation is to fecure fubfiftence, has neither leifure nor capacity for entering into that path of intricate and refined fpeculation, which conducts to the knowledge of the principles of rational religion. When the intellectual powers are juft beginning to unfold, and their firft feeble exertions are directed towards a few objects of primary neceffity and ufe; when the faculties of the mind are fo limited as not to have formed general and abftract ideas; when language is fo barren as to be deftitute of names to diftinguifh any thing not perceivable by fome of the fenfes; it is prepofterous to expect that men fhould be capable of tracing the relation between effects and their caufes; or to fuppofe that they fhould rife from the contemplation of the former to the difcovery of the latter, and form juft conceptions of one Supreme Being, as the Creator and Governor of the univerfe. The idea of creation is fo familiar, wherever the mind is enlarged by fcience, and illuminated by revelation, that we feldom reflect how profound and abftrufe the idea is, or confider what progrefs man muft have made in obfervation and refearch, before he could arrive at any diftinct knowledge of this elementary principle in religion. But even in its rude ftate, the human mind, formed for religion,

gion, opens to the reception of ideas, which are deftined, when corrected and refined, to be the great fource of confolation amidft the calamities of life. Thefe apprehenfions, however, are originally indiftinct and perplexed, and feem to be fuggefted rather by the dread of impending evils, than to flow from gratitude for bleffings received. While nature holds on her courfe with uniform and undifturbed regularity, men enjoy the benefits refulting from it, without much inquiry concerning its caufe. But every deviation from this regular courfe roufes and aftonifhes them. When they behold events to which they are not accuftomed, they fearch for the caufes of them with eager curiofity. Their underftanding is often unable to difcover thefe, but imagination, a more forward and ardent faculty of the mind, decides without hefitation. It afcribes the extraordinary occurrences in nature to the influence of invifible beings, and fuppofes the thunder, the hurricane, and the earthquake, to be the immediate effect of their agency. Alarmed by thefe natural evils, and expofed, at the fame time, to many dangers and difafters, which are unavoidable in the early and uncivilized ftate of fociety, men have recourfe for protection to power fuperior to what is human, and the firft rites or practices which bear any refemblance to acts of religion have it for their object to avert evils which they fuffer or dread [x].

[x] In the fecond volume of the Hiftory of America, p. 183, of fifth edition, I gave nearly a fimilar account of the origin of falfe religion. Inftead of labouring to convey the fame ideas in different language, I have inferted here fome paragraphs in the fame words I then ufed.

II. As

II. As superstition and false religion take their rise, in every country, from nearly the same sentiments and apprehensions, the invisible beings, who are the first objects of veneration, have every where a near resemblance. To conceive an idea of one superintending mind, capable of arranging and directing all the various operations of nature, seems to be an attainment far beyond the powers of man in the more early stages of his progress. His theories, more suited to the limited sphere of his own observation, are not so refined. He supposes that there is a distinct cause of every remarkable effect, and ascribes to a separate power every event which attracts his attention, or excites his terror. He fancies that it is the province of one deity to point the lightning, and, with an awful sound, to hurl the irresistible thunderbolt at the head of the guilty; that another rides in the whirlwind, and, at his pleasure, raises or stills the tempest; that a third rules over the ocean; that a fourth is the god of battles; that while malevolent powers scatter the seeds of animosity and discord, and kindle in the breast those angry passions which give rise to war, and terminate in destruction, others, of a nature more benign, by inspiring the hearts of men with kindness and love, strengthen the bonds of social union, augment the happiness, and increase the number of the human race.

Without descending farther into detail, or attempting to enumerate that infinite multitude of deities to which the fancy or the fears of men have allotted the direction of the several departments in nature, we may recognise a striking uniformity of features in the systems of superstition established throughout

every part of the earth. The lefs men have advanced beyond the ftate of favage life, and the more flender their acquaintance with the operations of nature, the fewer were their deities in number, and the more compendious was their theological creed; but as their mind gradually opened, and their knowledge continued to extend, the objects of their veneration multiplied, and the articles of their faith became more numerous. This took place remarkably among the Greeks in Europe, and the Indians in Afia, the two people, in thofe great divifions of the earth, who were moft early civilized, and to whom, for that reafon, I fhall confine all my obfervations. They believed, that over every movement in the natural world, and over every function in civil or domeftic life, even the moft common and trivial, a particular deity prefided. The manner in which they arranged the ftations of thefe fuperintending powers, and the offices which they allotted to each, were in many refpects the fame. What is fuppofed to be performed by the power of Jupiter, of Neptune, of Æolus, of Mars, of Venus, according to the mythology of the Weft, is afcribed in the Eaft to the agency of Agnée, the god of fire; Varoon, the god of oceans; Vayoo, the god of wind [y]; Cama, the god of love; and a variety of other divinities.

The ignorance and credulity of men having thus peopled the heavens with imaginary beings, they afcribed to them fuch qualities and actions as they deemed fuitable to their character and functions. It is one of the benefits derived from true re-

[y] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 94.

ligion,

ligion, that by ſetting before men a ſtandard of perfect excellence, which they ſhould have always in their eye, and endeavour to reſemble, it may be ſaid to bring down virtue from heaven to earth, and to form the human mind after a divine model. In fabricating ſyſtems of falſe religion the procedure is directly the reverſe. Men aſcribe to the beings whom they have deified, ſuch actions as they themſelves admire and celebrate. The qualities of the gods who are the objects of adoration, are copied from thoſe of the worſhippers who bow down before them; and thus many of the imperfections peculiar to men have found admittance into heaven. By knowing the adventures and attributes of any falſe deity, we can pronounce, with ſome degree of certainty, what muſt have been the ſtate of ſociety and manners when he was elevated to that dignity. The mythology of Greece plainly indicates the character of the age in which it was formed. It muſt have been in times of the greateſt licentiouſneſs, anarchy, and violence, that divinities of the higheſt rank could be ſuppoſed capable of perpetrating actions, or of being influenced by paſſions, which, in more enlightened periods, would be deemed a diſgrace to human nature; it muſt have been when the earth was ſtill infeſted with deſtructive monſters, and mankind, under forms of government too feeble to afford them protection, were expoſed to the depredations of lawleſs robbers, or the cruelty of ſavage oppreſſors, that the well-known labours of Hercules, by which he was raiſed from earth to heaven, could have been neceſſary, or would have been deemed ſo highly meritorious. The ſame obſervation is applicable to the ancient mythology of India. Many of the adventures and exploits of the Indian deities

are ſuited to the rudeſt ages of turbulence and rapine. It was to check diſorder, to redreſs wrongs, and to clear the earth of powerful oppreſſors, that Viſhnou, a divinity of the higheſt order, is ſaid to have become ſucceſſively incarnate, and to have appeared on earth in various forms [z].

III. The character and functions of thoſe deities which ſuperſtition created to itſelf as objects of its veneration, having every where a near reſemblance, the rites of their worſhip were every where extremely ſimilar. Accordingly as deities were diſtinguiſhed, either by ferocity of character or licentiouſneſs of conduct, it is obvious what ſervices muſt have been deemed moſt acceptable to them. In order to conciliate the favour, or to appeaſe the wrath, of the former, faſts, mortifications, and penances, all rigid, and many of them excruciating to an extreme degree, were the means employed. Their altars were always bathed in blood, the moſt coſtly victims were offered, whole hecatombs were ſlaughtered, even human ſacrifices were not unknown, and were held to be the moſt powerful expiations. In order to gain the good-will of the deities of the latter deſcription, recourſe was had to inſtitutions of a very different kind, to ſplendid ceremonies, gay feſtivals, heightened by all the pleaſures of poetry, muſick, and dancing, but often terminating in ſcenes of indulgence too indecent to be deſcribed. Of both theſe, inſtances occur in the rites of Greek and Roman worſhip, which I need not mention to my learned readers [a]. In

[z] Voyage de Sonnerat. tom. i. p. 158, &c.

[a] Strab. lib. viii. p. 581. A. Lib. xii. p. 837. C.

the Eaſt the ceremonial of ſuperſtition is nearly the ſame. The manners of the Indians, though diſtinguiſhed, from the time when they became known to the people of the Weſt, for mildneſs, ſeem, in a more remote period, to have been, in a greater degree, ſimilar to thoſe of other nations. Several of their deities were fierce and awful in their nature, and were repreſented in their temples under the moſt terrific forms. If we did not know the dominion of ſuperſtition over the human mind, we ſhould hardly believe, that a ritual of worſhip ſuited to the character of ſuch deities could have been eſtabliſhed among a gentle people. Every act of religion, performed in honour of ſome of their gods, ſeems to have been preſcribed by fear. Mortifications and penances ſo rigorous, ſo painful, and ſo long continued, that we read the accounts of them with aſtoniſhment and horror, were multiplied. Repugnant as it is to the feelings of an Hindoo, to ſhed the blood of any creature that has life, many different animals, even the moſt uſeful, the horſe and the cow, were offered up as victims upon the altars of ſome of their gods [b]; and what is ſtill more ſtrange, the Pagodas of the Eaſt were polluted with human ſacrifices, as well as the temples of the Weſt [c]. But religious inſtitutions, and ceremonies of a leſs ſevere kind, were more adapted to the genius of a people, formed, by the extreme ſenſibility both of their mental and corporeal frame, to an immoderate love of pleaſure. In no part of the earth was a connection between

[b] Ayeen Akberry, vol. iii. p. 241. Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 251.

[c] Heeto-pades, p. 185—322. Aſiat. Reſearches, p. 265. Voyage de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 207. Roger, p. 251.

the

the gratification of ſenſual deſire and the rites of public religion, diſplayed with more avowed indecency than in India. In every Pagoda there was a band of women ſet apart for the ſervice of the idol honoured there, and devoted from their early years to a life of pleaſure; for which the Brahmins prepared them by an education which added ſo many elegant accompliſhments to their natural charms, that what they gained by their profligacy, often brought no inconſiderable acceſſion to the revenue of the temple. In every function performed in the Pagodas, as well as in every public proceſſion, it is the office of theſe women to dance before the idol, and to ſing hymns in his praiſe; and it is difficult to ſay, whether they treſpaſs moſt againſt decency by the geſtures they exhibit, or by the verſes which they recite. The walls of the Pagoda are covered with paintings, in a ſtile no leſs indelicate[d]; and in the innermoſt receſs of the temple, for it would be profane to call it the ſanctuary, is placed the *Lingam*, an emblem of productive power too groſs to be explained[e].

IV. How abſurd ſoever the articles of faith may be which ſuperſtition has adopted, or how unhallowed the rites which it preſcribes, the former are received in every age and country with unheſitating aſſent, by the great body of the people, and the latter obſerved with ſcrupulous exactneſs. In our reaſonings

[d] Voyage de Gentil. vol. i. p. 244. 260. Preface to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. lvii.

[e] Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 157. Voyage de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 41. 175. Sketches, p. 168. Hamilton's Trav. vol. i. p. 379.

ings concerning religious opinions and practices which differ widely from our own, we are extremely apt to err. Having been inſtructed ourſelves in the principles of a religion, worthy in every reſpect of that divine wiſdom by which they were dictated, we frequently expreſs wonder at the credulity of nations in embracing ſyſtems of belief which appear to us ſo directly repugnant to right reaſon, and ſometimes ſuſpect that tenets ſo wild and extravagant do not really gain credit with them. But experience may ſatisfy us, that neither our wonder nor ſuſpicions are well founded. No article of the public religion was called in queſtion by thoſe people of ancient Europe with whoſe hiſtory we are beſt acquainted, and no practice which it enjoined appeared improper to them. On the other hand, every opinion that tended to diminiſh the reverence of men for the gods of their country, or to alienate them from their worſhip, excited among the Greeks and Romans, that indignant zeal which is natural to every people attached to their religion, by a firm perſuaſion of its truth. The attachment of the Indians, both in ancient and modern times, to the tenets and rites of their anceſtors, has been, if poſſible, ſtill greater. In no country, of which we have any account, were precautions taken with ſo much ſolicitude, to place the great body of the people beyond the reach of any temptation to doubt or diſbelief. They not only were prevented, (as I have already obſerved the great bulk of mankind muſt always be in every country,) from entering upon any ſpeculative inquiry, by the various occupations of active and laborious life, but any attempt to extend the ſphere of their knowledge was expreſsly prohibited. If one of the Sooder caſt, by far the moſt numerous of the four into which the

whole nation was divided, presumed to read any portion of the sacred books, in which all the science known in India is contained, he was severely punished; if he ventured to get it by heart, he was put to death [f]. To aspire after any higher degree of knowledge than the Brahmins have been pleased to teach, would be deemed not only presumption but impiety. Even the higher Casts depended entirely for instruction on the Brahmins, and could acquire no portion of science but what they deigned to communicate. By means of this, a devout reverence was universally maintained for those institutions which were considered as sacred; and, though the faith of the Hindoos has been often tried by severe persecutions, excited by the bigotry of their Mahomedan conquerors, no people ever adhered with greater fidelity to the tenets and rites of their ancestors [g].

V. We may observe, that when science and philosophy are diffused through any country, the system of superstition is subjected to a scrutiny from which it was formerly exempt, and opinions spread which imperceptibly diminish its influence over the minds of men. A free and full examination is always favourable to truth, but fatal to error. What is received with implicit faith in ages of darkness, will excite contempt or indignation in an enlightened period. The history of religion in Greece and Italy, the only countries of Europe which, in ancient times, were distinguished for their attainments in science,

[f] Code of Gentoo Laws, ch. xxi. § 7.

[g] Orme's Fragment, p. 102. Sonnerat. vol. i. p. 194.

confirms

confirms the truth of this obſervation. As ſoon as ſcience made ſuch progreſs in Greece as rendered men capable of diſcerning the wiſdom, the foreſight, and the goodneſs diſplayed in creating, preſerving, and governing the world, they muſt have perceived, that the characters of the divinities which were propoſed as the objects of adoration in their temples, could not entitle them to be conſidered as the preſiding powers in nature. A poet might addreſs Jupiter as the father of gods and men, who governed both by eternal laws; but, to a philoſopher, the ſon of Saturn, the ſtory of whoſe life is a ſeries of violent and licentious deeds, which would render any man odious or deſpicable, muſt have appeared altogether unworthy of that ſtation. The nature of the religious ſervice celebrated in their temples muſt have been no leſs offenſive to an enlightened mind, than the character of the deities in honour of whom it was performed. Inſtead of inſtitutions, tending to reclaim men from vice, to form or to ſtrengthen habits of virtue, or to elevate the mind to a ſenſe of its proper dignity, ſuperſtition either occupied its votaries in frivolous unmeaning ceremonies, or preſcribed rites, which operated, with fatal influence, in inflaming the paſſions and corrupting the heart.

It is with timidity, however, and caution, that men venture to attack the eſtabliſhed religion of their country, or to impugn opinions which have been long held ſacred. At firſt, ſome philoſophers endeavoured, by allegorical interpretations and refined comments, to explain the popular mythology, as if it had been a deſcription of the powers of nature, and of the various events and revolutions which take place in the

ſyſtem of the material world, and endeavoured, by this expedient, to palliate many of its abſurdities. By degrees, bolder theories concerning religion were admitted into the ſchools of ſcience. Philoſophers of enlarged views, ſenſible of the impiety of the popular ſuperſtition, formed ideas concerning the perfections of one Supreme Being, the Creator and Ruler of the univerſe, as juſt and rational as have ever been attained by the unaſſiſted powers of the human mind.

If from Europe we now turn to Aſia, we ſhall find, that the obſervation which I have made upon the hiſtory of falſe religion holds equally true there. In India as well as in Greece, it was by cultivating ſcience that men were firſt led to examine and to entertain doubts with reſpect to the eſtabliſhed ſyſtems of ſuperſtition; and when we conſider the great difference between the eccleſiaſtical conſtitution (if I may uſe that expreſſion) of the two countries, we are apt to imagine that the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem lay more open to examination in the latter than in the former. In Greece there was not any diſtinct race or order of men ſet apart for performing the functions of religion, or to ſerve as hereditary and intereſted guardians of its tenets and inſtitutions. But in India the Brahmins were born the miniſters of religion, and they had an excluſive right of preſiding in all the numerous rites of worſhip which ſuperſtition preſcribed as neceſſary to avert the wrath of Heaven, or to render it propitious. Theſe diſtinctions and privileges ſecured to them a wonderful aſcendant over their countrymen; and every conſideration that can influence the human mind, the honour, the intereſt, the power of their order, called upon them to ſupport the

the tenets, and to maintain the inftitutions and rites, with which the prefervation of this afcendant was fo intimately connected.

But as the moft eminent perfons of the caft devoted their lives to the cultivation of fcience, the progrefs which they made in all the branches of it (of which I have given fome account) was great, and enabled them to form fuch a juft idea of the fyftem of nature, and of the power, wifdom, and goodnefs difplayed in the formation and government of it, as elevated their minds above the popular fuperftition, and led them to acknowledge and reverence one Supreme Being, "the Creator "of all things (to ufe their own expreffions), and from whom "all things proceed[h]."

This is the idea which Abul Fazel, who examined the opinions of the Brahmins with the greateft attention and candour, gives of their theology. "They all," fays he, "believe in "the unity of the Godhead, and although they hold images "in high veneration, it is only becaufe they reprefent celeftial "beings, and prevent their thoughts from wandering[i]." The fentiments of the moft intelligent Europeans who have vifited India, coincide perfectly with his, in refpect to this point. The accounts which Mr. Bernier received from the Pundits of Benares, both of their external worfhip, and of one Sovereign Lord being the fole object of their devotion, is precifely the fame with that given by Abul Fazel[k]. Mr. Wilkins, better

[h] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 84.
[i] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 3.
[k] Voyage, tom. ii. p. 159.

qualified perhaps than any European ever was to judge with respect to this subject, represents the learned Brahmins of the present times as Theists, believers in the unity of God [l]. Of the same opinion is M. Sonnerat, who resided in India seven years in order to inquire into the manners, sciences, and religion of the Hindoos [m]. The Pundits, who translated the Code of Gentoo Laws, declare, "that it was the Supreme Being, "who, by his power, formed all creatures of the animal, vegetable, and material world, from the four elements of fire, "water, air, and earth, to be an ornament to the magazine of "creation; and whose comprehensive benevolence selected "man, the center of knowledge, to have dominion and "authority over the rest; and, having bestowed upon this favourite object judgment and understanding, gave him supremacy over the corners of the world [n]."

Nor are these to be regarded as refined sentiments of latter times. The Brahmins being considered by the Mahomedan conquerors of India as the guardians of the national religion, have been so studiously depressed by their fanatical zeal, that the modern members of that order are as far inferior to their ancestors in science as in power. It is from the writings of their ancient Pundits that they derive the most liberal sentiments which they entertain at present, and the wisdom for which they are now celebrated has been transmitted to them from ages very remote.

[l] Preface to Baghvat-Geeta, p. 24.
[m] Voyage, tom. i. p. 198.
[n] Prelim. Discours. p. lxxiii.

That

THAT this assertion is well founded we are enabled to pronounce with certainty, as the most profound mysteries of Hindoo theology, concealed with the greatest care from the body of the people, have been unveiled by the translations from the Sanskreet language lately published. The principal design of the Baghvat-Geeta, an episode in the Mahabarat, a poem of the highest antiquity, and of the greatest authority in India, seems to have been to establish the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead, and from a just view of the divine nature, to deduce an idea of what worship will be most acceptable to a perfect Being. In it, amidst much obscure metaphysical discussion, some ornaments of fancy unsuited to our taste, and some thoughts elevated to a tract of sublimity into which our habits of judgment will find it difficult to pursue them[a], we find descriptions of the Supreme Being entitled to equal praise with those of the Greek philosophers which I have celebrated. Of these I shall now produce one which I formerly mentioned, and refer my readers for others to the work itself: "O mighty "Being," says Arjoon, "who art the prime Creator, eternal God "of Gods, the World's Mansion. Thou art the incorruptible "Being, distinct from all things transient. Thou art before "all Gods, the ancient *Pooroosh* [i. e. vital soul], and the "Supreme Supporter of the universe. Thou knowest all things, "and art worthy to be known; thou art the Supreme Man-"sion, and by thee, O infinite Form, the universe was spread "abroad.—Reverence be unto thee before and behind; reve-"rence be unto thee on all sides; O thou who art all in all.

[a] Mr. Hastings's Letter, prefixed to the Baghvat-Geeta, p. 7.

" Infinite is thy power and thy glory.—Thou art the father of " all things, animate and inanimate. Thou art the wife in- " ftructor of the whole, worthy to be adored. There is " none like unto thee; where then, in the three worlds, " is there one above thee? Wherefore I bow down; and, " with my body proftrate upon the ground, crave thy mercy, " Lord! Worthy to be adored; for thou fhouldeft bear with " me, even as a father with his fon, a friend with his friend, " a lover with his beloved [p]." A defcription of the Supreme Being is given in one of the facred books of the Hindoos, from which it is evident what were the general fentiments of the learned Brahmins concerning the divine nature and perfections: " As God is immaterial, he is above all conception; " as he is invifible, he can have no form; but from what we " behold of his works we may conclude, that he is eternal, om- " nipotent, knowing all things, and prefent every where [q]."

To men capable of forming fuch ideas of the Deity, the public fervice in the Pagodas muft have appeared to be an idolatrous worfhip of images, by a fuperftitious multiplication of frivolous or immoral rites; and they muft have feen that it was only by fanctity of heart, and purity of manners, men could hope to gain the approbation of a Being perfect in goodnefs. This truth Veias labours to inculcate in the Mahabarat, but with the prudent referve, and artful precautions, natural to a Brahmin, ftudious neither to offend his countrymen, nor to diminifh the influence of his own order. His ideas concerning

[p] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 94. 95.

[q] Dow's Differt. p. xl.

the

the mode of worſhipping the Deity, are explained in many ſtriking paſſages of the poem, but, unwilling to multiply quotations, I ſatisfy myſelf with referring to them[r].

WHEN we recollect how ſlowly the mind of man opens to abſtract ideas, and how difficult (according to an obſervation in the Mahabarat) an inviſible path is to corporeal beings, it is evident that the Hindoos muſt have attained an high degree of improvement before their ſentiments roſe ſo far ſuperior to the popular ſuperſtition of their country. The different ſtates of Greece had ſubſiſted long, and had made conſiderable progreſs in refinement, before the errors of falſe religion began to be detected. It was not until the age of Socrates, and in the ſchools of philoſophy eſtabliſhed by his diſciples, that principles adverſe to the tenets of the popular ſuperſtition were much propagated.

A LONGER period of time elapſed before the Romans, a nation of warriors and ſtateſmen, were enlightened by ſcience, or ventured upon any free diſquiſition concerning the objects or the rites of worſhip authorized by their anceſtors. But in India the happy effects of progreſs in ſcience were much more early conſpicuous. Without adopting the wild computations of Indian chronology, according to which, the Mahabarat was compoſed above four thouſand years ago, we muſt allow, that it is a work of very great antiquity, and the author of it diſcovers an acquaintance with the principles of theology, of mo-

[r] Baghvat Geeta, p. 55. 67. 75. 97. 119.

rals, and of metaphyſics, more juſt and rational, than ſeems to have been attained, at that period, by any nation whoſe hiſtory is known.

But ſo unable are the limited powers of the human mind to form an adequate idea of the perfections and operations of the Supreme Being, that in all the theories concerning them, of the moſt eminent philoſophers in the moſt enlightened nations, we find a lamentable mixture of ignorance and error. From theſe the Brahmins were not more exempt than the ſages of other countries. As they held that the ſyſtem of nature was not only originally arranged by the power and wiſdom of God, but that every event which happened was brought about by his immediate interpoſition, and as they could not comprehend how a being could act in any place unleſs where it was preſent, they ſuppoſed the Deity to be a vivifying principle diffuſed through the whole creation, an univerſal ſoul that animated each part of it [s]. Every intelligent nature, particularly the ſouls of men, they conceived to be portions ſeparated from this great ſpirit [t], to which, after fulfilling their deſtiny on earth, and attaining a proper degree of purity, they would be again reunited. In order to efface the ſtains with which a ſoul, during its reſidence on earth, has been defiled, by the indulgence of ſenſual and corrupt appetites, they taught that it muſt paſs, in a long ſucceſſion of tranſmigrations, through the bodies of different animals, until, by what it ſuffers and what it learns in

[s] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 65. 78. 85. Bernier, tom. ii. p. 163.
[t] Dow's Differt. p. xliii.

the

the various forms of its exiſtence, it ſhall be ſo thoroughly refined from all pollution as to be rendered meet for being abſorbed into the divine eſſence, and returns like a drop into that unbounded ocean from which it originally iſſued [u]. Theſe doctrines of the Brahmins, concerning the Deity, as the ſoul which pervades all nature, giving activity and vigour to every part of it, as well as the final re-union of all intelligent creatures to their primæval ſource, coincide perfectly with the tenets of the Stoical School. It is remarkable, that after having obſerved a near reſemblance in the moſt ſublime ſentiments of their moral doctrine, we ſhould likewiſe diſcover ſuch a ſimilarity in the errors of their theological ſpeculations [x].

The human mind, however, when deſtitute of ſuperior guidance, is apt to fall into a practical error with reſpect to religion, of a tendency ſtill more dangerous. When philoſophers, by their attainments in ſcience, began to acquire ſuch juſt ideas of the nature and perfections of the Supreme Being, as convinced them that the popular ſyſtem of ſuperſtition was not only abſurd but impious, they were fully aware of all the danger which might ariſe from communicating what they had diſcovered to the people, incapable of comprehending the force of thoſe reaſons which had ſwayed with them, and ſo zealouſly attached to eſtabliſhed opinions, as to revolt againſt any attempt to detect their falſehood. Inſtead, therefore, of allowing any ray of that know-

[u] Voy. de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 192. 200. Baghvat-Geeta, p. 39. 115. Dow's Diſſert. p. xliii.

[x] Lipſij Phyſiol. Stoicor. lib. i. diſſert. viii. xxi. Seneca, Antoninus, Epictetus, paſſim.

ledge which illuminated their own minds to reach them, they formed a theory to juſtify their own conduct, and to prevent the darkneſs of that cloud which hung over the minds of their fellow-men from being ever diſpelled. The vulgar and unlearned, they contended, had no right to truth. Doomed by their condition to remain in ignorance, they were to be kept in order by deluſion, and allured to do what is right, or deterred from venturing upon what is wrong, by the hope of thoſe imaginary rewards which ſuperſtition promiſes, and the dread of thoſe puniſhments which it threatens. In confirmation of this, I might quote the doctrine of moſt of the philoſophic ſects, and produce the words of almoſt every eminent Greek and Roman writer. It will be ſufficient, however, to lay before my readers a remarkable paſſage in Strabo, to whom I have been ſo often indebted in the courſe of my reſearches, and who was no leſs qualified to judge with reſpect to the political opinions of his contemporaries, than to deſcribe the countries which they inhabited. "What is marvellous in fable, is employed," ſays he, "ſometimes to pleaſe, and ſometimes to inſpire terror, and "both theſe are of uſe, not only with children, but with per-"ſons of mature age. To children we propoſe delightful fic-"tions, in order to encourage them to act well, and ſuch as "as are terrible, in order to reſtrain them from evil. Thus "when men are united in ſociety, they are incited to what "is laudable, by hearing the poets celebrate the ſplendid actions "of fabulous ſtory, ſuch as the labours of Hercules and The-"ſeus, in reward for which they are now honoured as divini-"ties, or by beholding their illuſtrious deeds exhibited to "public view in painting and ſculpture. On the other hand,

" they are deterred from vice, when the punishments inflicted " by the gods upon evil-doers are related, and threats are de- " nounced against them in awful words, or represented by " frightful figures, and when men believe that these threats " have been really executed upon the guilty. For it is impossi- " ble to conduct women and the gross multitude, and to " render them holy, pious, and upright, by the precepts of " reason and philosophy; superstition, or the fear of the gods, " must be called in aid, the influence of which is founded on " fictions and prodigies. For the thunder of Jupiter, the ægis " of Minerva, the trident of Neptune, the torches and snakes " of the furies, the spears of the gods, adorned with ivy, " and the whole ancient theology, are all fables, which the " legislators who formed the political constitution of states " employ as bugbears to overawe the credulous and simple [y]."

These ideas of the philosophers of Europe were precisely the same which the Brahmins had adopted in India, and according to which they regulated their conduct with respect to the great body of the people. As their order had an exclusive right to read the sacred books, to cultivate and to teach science, they could more effectually prevent all who were not members of it from acquiring any portion of information beyond what they were pleased to impart. When the free circulation of knowledge is not circumscribed by such restrictions, the whole community derives benefit from every new acquisition in science, the influence of which, both upon sentiment and conduct, extends insensibly from the few to the many, from the learned to

[y] Strab. lib. i. p. 36. B.

the

the ignorant. But wherever the dominion of falſe religion is completely eſtabliſhed, the body of the people gain nothing by the greateſt improvements in knowledge. Their philoſophers conceal from them, with the utmoſt ſolicitude, the truths which they have diſcovered, and labour to ſupport that fabric of ſuperſtition which it was their duty to have overturned. They not only enjoin others to reſpect the religious rites preſcribed by the laws of their country, but conform to them in their own practice, and, with every external appearance of reverence and devotion, bow down before the altars of deities, who muſt inwardly be the objects of their contempt. Inſtead of reſembling the teachers of true religion in the benevolent ardour with which they have always communicated to their fellow-men the knowledge of thoſe important truths with which their own minds were enlightened and rendered happy, the ſages of Greece, and the Brahmins of India, carried on, with ſtudied artifice, a ſcheme of deceit, and, according to an emphatic expreſſion of an inſpired writer, they *detained* the truth in unrighteouſneſs [z]. They knew and approved what was true, but among the reſt of mankind they laboured to ſupport and to perpetuate what is falſe.

THUS I have gone through all the particulars which I originally propoſed to examine, and have endeavoured to diſcover the ſtate of the inhabitants of India with reſpect to each of them. If I had aimed at nothing elſe than to deſcribe the civil policy, the arts, the ſciences, and religious inſtitutions of one of the moſt ancient and moſt numerous races of men,

[z] Rom. i. 18.

that

that alone would have led me into inquiries and discussions both curious and instructive. I own, however, that I have all along kept in view an object more interesting, as well as of greater importance, and entertain hopes, that if the account which I have given of the early and high civilization of India, and of the wonderful progress of its inhabitants in elegant arts and useful science, shall be received as just and well-established, it may have some influence upon the behaviour of Europeans towards that people. Unfortunately for the human species, in whatever quarter of the globe the people of Europe have acquired dominion, they have found the inhabitants not only in a state of society and improvement far inferior to their own, but different in their complexion, and in all their habits of life. Men in every stage of their career are so satisfied with the progress made by the community of which they are members, that it becomes to them a standard of perfection, and they are apt to regard people, whose condition is not similar, with contempt, and even aversion. In Africa and America, the dissimilitude is so conspicuous, that, in the pride of their superiority, Europeans thought themselves entitled to reduce the natives of the former to slavery, and to exterminate those of the latter. Even in India, though far advanced beyond the two other quarters of the globe in improvement, the colour of the inhabitants, their effeminate appearance, their unwarlike spirit, the wild extravagance of their religious tenets and ceremonies, and many other circumstances, confirmed Europeans in such an opinion of their own pre-eminence, that they have always viewed and treated them as an inferior race of men. Happy would it be if any of the four European nations, who have, successively, acquired extensive territories and power in India, could altogether

vindicate itſelf from having acted in this manner. Nothing, however, can have a more direct and powerful tendency to inſpire Europeans, proud of their own ſuperior attainments in policy, ſcience, and arts, with proper ſentiments concerning the people of India, and to teach them a due regard for their natural rights as men, than their being accuſtomed, not only to conſider the Hindoos of the preſent times as a knowing and ingenious race of men, but to view them as deſcended from anceſtors who had attained to a very high degree of improvement, many ages before the leaſt ſtep towards civilization had been taken in any part in Europe. It was by an impartial and candid inquiry into their manners, that the Emperor Akber was led to conſider the Hindoos as no leſs entitled to protection and favour than his other ſubjects, and to govern them with ſuch equity and mildneſs, as to merit from a grateful people the honourable appellation of "The Guardian of Mankind." It was from a thorough knowledge of their character and acquirements, that his Vizier, Abul Fazel, with a liberality of mind unexampled among Mahomedans, pronounces an high encomium on the virtues of the Hindoos, both as individuals and as members of ſociety, and celebrates their attainments in arts and ſciences of every kind [a]. If I might preſume to hope that the deſcription which I have given of the manners and inſtitutions of the people of India could contribute in the ſmalleſt degree, and with the moſt remote influence, to render their character more reſpectable, and their condition more happy, I ſhall cloſe my literary labours with the ſatisfaction of thinking that I have not lived or written in vain.

[a] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 2. 81. 95.

NOTES

TO THE

APPENDIX.

NOTE I. p. 259.

ACCORDING to all the writers of antiquity, the Indians are ſaid to be divided into ſeven tribes or caſts. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1029. C, &c. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 153, &c. Arrian. Indic. c. 10. They were led into this error, it is probable, by conſidering ſome of the ſubdiviſions of the caſts, as if they had been a diſtinct independent order. But that there were no more than four original caſts, we learn from the concurrent teſtimony of the beſt informed modern travellers. A moſt diſtinct account of theſe we have in "La Porte Ouverte, " ou la vraye Repreſentation de la Vie, des Mœurs, de la Re- " ligion, et du Service des Bramines, qui demeurent ſur les

" Coftes de Choromandel," &c. This was compiled, before the middle of laft century, by Abraham Roger, chaplain of the Dutch factory at Pullicate. By gaining the confidence of an intelligent Brahmin, he acquired information concerning the manners and religion of the Indians, more authentic and extenfive than was known to Europeans prior to the late tranflations from the Sanfkreet language, I mention this book, becaufe it feems to be lefs known than it deferves to be. There remains now no doubt with refpect either to the number or the functions of the cafts, as both are afcertained from the moft ancient and facred books of the Hindoos, and confirmed by the accounts of their own inftitutions, given by Brahmins eminent for their learning. According to them, the different cafts proceeded from Brahma, the immediate agent of the creation under the Supreme Power, in the following manner, which eftablifhes both the rank which they were to hold, and the office which they were required to perform.

The *Brahmin*, from the mouth (wifdom): To pray, to read, to inftruct.

The *Chehteree*, from the arms (ftrength): To draw the bow, to fight, to govern.

The *Bice*, from the belly or thighs (nourifhment): To provide the neceffaries of life by agriculture and traffick.

The *Sooder*, from the feet (fubjection): To labour, to ferve.

THE

THE prefcribed occupations of all thefe claffes are effential in a well-regulated ftate. Subordinate to them is a fifth, or adventitious clafs, denominated *Burrun Sunker*, fuppofed to be the offspring of an unlawful union between perfons of different cafts. Thefe are moftly dealers in petty articles of retail trade. Preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. xlvi. and xcix. This adventitious caft is not mentioned, as far as I know, by any European author. The diftinction was too nice to be obferved by them, and they feem to confider the members of this caft, as belonging to the Sooder. Befides thefe acknowledged cafts, there is a race of unhappy men, denominated, on the Coromandel coaft, *Pariars*, and, in other parts of India, *Chandalas*. Thefe are out-cafts from their original order, who, by their mifconduct, have forfeited all the privileges of it. Their condition is, undoubtedly, the loweft degradation of human nature. No perfon of any caft will have the leaft communication with them. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 55, 56. If a Pariar approach a *Nayr*, *i. e.* a warrior of high caft, on the Malabar coaft, he may put him to death with impunity. Water or milk are confidered as defiled even by their fhadow paffing over them, and cannot be ufed until they are purified. Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 243. It is almoft impoffible for words to exprefs the fenfation of vilenefs that the name of Pariar or Chandala conveys to the mind of a Hindoo. Every Hindoo who violates the rules or inftitutions of his caft finks into this degraded fituation. This it is which renders Hindoos fo refolute in adhering to the inftitutions of their tribe, becaufe the lofs of caft is, to them, the lofs of all human comfort and refpectability; and is a punifh-

ment, beyond comparifon, more fevere than excommunication, in the moft triumphant period of Papal power.

The four original cafts are named, and their functions defcribed in the Mahabarat, the moft ancient book of the Hindoos, and of higher authority than any with which Europeans are hitherto acquainted. Baghvat-Geeta, p. 130. The fame diftinction of cafts was known to the author of Heeto-pades, another work of confiderable antiquity, tranflated from the Sanfkreet, p. 251.

The mention of one circumftance refpecting the diftinction of cafts has been omitted in the text. Though the line of feparation be fo drawn, as to render the afcent from an inferior to a higher caft abfolutely impoffible, and it would be regarded as a moft enormous impiety, if one in a lower order fhould prefume to perform any function belonging to thofe of a fuperior caft; yet, in certain cafes, the Pundits declare it to be lawful for perfons of a high clafs to exercife fome of the occupations allotted to a clafs below their own, without lofing their caft by doing fo. Pref. of Pundits to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. 100. Accordingly we find Brahmins employed in the fervice of their princes, not only as minifters of ftate, Orme's Fragments, p. 207, but in fubordinate ftations. Moft of the officers of high rank in the army of Sevagi, the founder of the Mahratta ftate, were Brahmins, and fome of them Pundits or learned Brahmins. Ibid. p. 97. Many Seapoys in the fervice of the Eaft India Company, particularly in the Bengal prefidency, are of the Brahmin caft.

ANOTHER

Another fact concerning the casts deserves notice. An immense number of pilgrims, amounting, in some years, to more than 150,000, visit the Pagoda of Jaggernaut, in Orissa, (one of the most ancient and most revered places of Hindoo worship,) at the time of the annual festival in honour of the deity to whom the temple is consecrated. The members of all the four casts are allowed promiscuously to approach the altar of the idol, and seating themselves without distinction, eat indiscriminately of the same food. This seems to indicate some remembrance of a state prior to the institution of casts, when all men were considered as equal. I have not such information as enables me to account for a practice so repugnant to the first ideas and principles of the Hindoos, either sacred or civil. Bernier, tom. ii. p. 102. Tavernier, book ii. c. 9. Anquetil. Disc. Prelim. p. 81. Sketches, p. 96.

Some of my readers must have observed, that I have given no account of the numerous orders of Indian devotees, to all of whom European writers give the appellation of *Faquirs*; a name by which the Mahomedans distinguish fanatical monks of their own religion. The light in which I have viewed the religious institutions of the Hindoos, did not render it necessary that I should consider the Indian Faquirs particularly. Their number, the rigour of their mortifications, the excruciating penances which they voluntarily undergo, and the high opinion which the people entertain of their sanctity, have struck all travellers who have visited India, and their descriptions of them are well known. The powerful influence of enthusiasm, the love of distinction, and the desire of obtaining some portion

tion of that reverence and thofe honours which the Brahmins are born to enjoy, may account for all the extraordinary things which they do and fuffer. One particular concerning them merits notice. This order of devotees appears to have been very ancient in India. The defcription of the *Germani*, which Strabo takes from Megafthenes, applies, almoft in every circumftance, to the modern Faquirs. Lib. xv. p. 1040. B.

NOTE II. p. 262.

WHAT I have afferted in the text is in general well-founded. It is the opinion, however, of gentlemen who have feen much of India, and who obferved all they faw with a difcerning eye, that the conquefts both of the Mahomedans and of the Europeans have had fome effect upon the manners and cuftoms of the natives. They imagine that the drefs which the Hindoos now wear, the turban, the jummah, and long drawers, is an imitation of that worn by their Mahomedan conquerors. The ancient drefs of the Indians, as defcribed by Arrian, Hift. Indic. c. 16. was a muflin cloth thrown loofely about their fhoulders, a muflin fhirt reaching to the middle of the leg, and their beards were died various colours; which is not the fame with that ufed at prefent. The cuftom of fecluding women, and the ftrictnefs with which they are confined, is likewife fuppofed to have been introduced by the Mahomedans. This fuppofition is in fome meafure confirmed by the drama of Sacontala, tranflated from the Sanfkreet. In that play, feveral female characters are introduced, who mingle

gle in ſociety, and converſe as freely with men, as women are accuſtomed to do in Europe. The author, we may preſume, deſcribes the manners, and adheres to the cuſtoms of his own age. But while I mention this remark, it is proper, likewiſe, to obſerve, that, from a paſſage in Strabo, there is reaſon to think, that, in the age of Alexander the Great, women in India were guarded with the ſame jealous attention as at preſent. " When their princes," (ſays he, copying Megaſthenes,) " ſet out upon a public hunt, they are accompanied by " a number of their women, but along the road in which " they travel, ropes are ſtretched on each ſide, and if any man " approach near to them he is inſtantly put to death." Lib. xv. p. 1037. A. The influence of European manners begins to be apparent among the Hindoos who reſide in the town of Calcutta. Some of them drive about in Engliſh chariots, ſit upon chairs, and furniſh their houſes with mirrors. Many circumſtances might be mentioned, were this the proper place, which, it is probable, will contribute to the progreſs of this ſpirit of imitation.

NOTE III. p. 262.

It is amuſing to obſerve how exactly the ideas of an intelligent Aſiatic co-incide with thoſe of the Europeans on this ſubject. " In reflecting," ſays he, " upon the poverty of " Turan [the countries beyond the Oxus] and Arabia, I was " at firſt at a loſs to aſſign a reaſon why theſe countries have " never been able to retain wealth, whilſt, on the contrary, it

" is daily increafing in Indoftan. Timour carried into Turan " the riches of Turkey, Perfia, and Indoftan, but they are " all diffipated; and, during the reigns of the four firft Ca- " liphs, Turkey, Perfia, part of Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt, and " Spain, were their tributaries; but ftill they were not rich. " It is evident, then, that this diffipation of the riches of a " ftate, muft have happened either from extraordinary drains, " or from fome defect in the government. Indoftan has been " frequently plundered by foreign invaders, and not one of its " kings ever gained for it any acquifition of wealth; nei- " ther has the country many mines of gold and filver, and " yet Indoftan abounds in money and every other kind of " wealth. The abundance of fpecie is undoubtedly owing to " the large importation of gold and filver in the fhips of " Europe, and other nations, many of whom bring ready " money in exchange for the manufactures and natural pro- " ductions of the country. If this is not the caufe of the " profperous ftate of Indoftan, it muft be owing to the peculiar " bleffing of God." Memoirs of Khojeh Abdul-kurreem, a Cafhmeerian of diftinction, p. 42.

NOTE IV. p. 267.

THAT the monarchs of India were the fole proprietors of land, is afferted in moft explicit terms by the ancients. The people (fay they) pay a land-tax to their kings, becaufe the kingdom is regal property. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 153. This was not peculiar to India. In all the great monarchies of the Eaft, the fole property of land feems to be vefted in the fo-

vereign as lord paramount. According to Chardin, this is the ftate of property in Perfia, and lands were let by the monarch to the farmers who cultivated them, on conditions nearly refembling thofe granted to the Indian Ryots. Voyages, tom. iii. p. 339, &c. 4to. M. Volney gives a fimilar account of the tenure by which lands are held in one of the great provinces of the Turkifh empire. Voy. en Syrie, &c. tom. ii. p. 369, &c. The precife mode, however, in which the Ryots of Indoftan held their poffeffions, is a circumftance in its ancient political conftitution, with refpect to which gentlemen of fuperior difcernment, who have refided long in the country, and filled fome of the higheft ftations in government, have formed very different opinions. Some have imagined that grants of land were made by the fovereign to villages or fmall communities, the inhabitants of which, under the direction of their own chiefs or heads-men, laboured it in common, and divided the produce of it among them in certain proportions. Defcript. de l'Inde, par M. Bernouilli, tom. ii. 223, &c. Others maintain, that the property of land has been transferred from the crown to hereditary officers of great eminence and power, denominated *Zemindars*, who collect the rents from the Ryots, and parcel out the lands among them. Others contend, that the office of the Zemindars is temporary and minifterial, that they are merely collectors of revenue, removeable at pleafure, and the tenure by which the Ryots hold their poffeffions is derived immediately from the fovereign. This laft opinion is fupported with great ability, by Mr. Grant, in an Inquiry into the Nature of Zemindary Tenures in the landed Property of Bengal, &c. This queftion ftill continues to be agitated in Bengal, and fuch plaufible arguments have been produced in fupport of the different

 opinions,

opinions, that although it be a point extremely interefting, as the future fyftem of Britifh finance in India appears likely to hinge, in an effential degree, upon it, perfons well acquainted with the ftate of India, have not been able thoroughly to make up their minds upon this fubject. Capt. Kirkpatrick's Introd. to the Inftitutes of Ghazan Khan. New Afiatic Mifcell. N° II. p. 130. Though the opinion of the Committee of Revenue, compofed of perfons eminent for their abilities, leans to a conclufion againft the hereditary right of the Zemindars in the foil, yet the Supreme Council, in the year 1786, declined, for good reafons, to give any decifive judgment on a fubject of fuch magnitude. This note was fent to the prefs before I had it in my power to perufe Mr. Roufe's ingenious and inftructive Differtation concerning the landed property of Bengal. In it he adopts an opinion contrary to that of Mr. Grant, and maintains, with that candour and liberality of fentiment which are always confpicuous where there is no other object in view but the difcovery of truth, that the Zemindars of Bengal poffefs their landed property by hereditary right. Did I poffefs fuch knowledge, either of the ftate of India, or of the fyftem of adminiftration eftablifhed there, as would be requifite for comparing thefe different theories, and determining which of them merits the preference, the fubject of my refearches does not render it neceffary to enter into fuch a difquifition. I imagine, however, that the ftate of landed property in India might be greatly illuftrated by an accurate comparifon of it with the nature of feudal tenures; and I apprehend that there might be traced there a fucceffion of changes taking place, in much the fame order as has been obferved in Europe, from which it might appear, that the poffeffion of land was granted at firft during pleafure, afterwards for life, and at length became perpetual and

and hereditary property. But even under this laſt form, when land is acquired either by purchaſe or inheritance, the manner in which the right of property is confirmed and rendered complete, in Europe by a Charter, in India by a *Sunnud* from the ſovereign, ſeems to point out what was its original ſtate. According to each of the theories which I have mentioned, the tenure and condition of the Ryots nearly reſemble the deſcription which I have given of them. Their ſtate, according to the accounts of intelligent obſervers, is as happy and independent as falls to the lot of any race of men employed in the cultivation of the earth. The ancient Greek and Roman writers, whoſe acquaintance with the interior parts of India was very imperfect, repreſent the fourth part of the annual produce of land as the general average of rent paid to the ſovereign. Upon the authority of a popular author who flouriſhed in India prior to the Chriſtian æra, we may conclude that a ſixth part of the people's income was, in his time, the uſual portion of the ſovereign. Sacontala, Act V. p. 53. It is now known that what the ſovereign receives from land varies greatly in different parts of the country, and is regulated by the fertility or barrenneſs of the ſoil, the nature of the climate, the abundance or ſcarcity of water, and many other obvious circumſtances. By the account given of it, I ſhould imagine that, in ſome diſtricts, it has been raiſed beyond its due proportion. One circumſtance with reſpect to the adminiſtration of revenue in Bengal merits notice, as it redounds to the honour of the Emperor Akber, the wiſdom of whoſe government I have often had occaſion to celebrate. A general and regular aſſeſſment of revenue in Bengal was formed in his reign. All the lands were then valued, and the rent of each inhabitant and of each village aſcertained.

A regular gradation of accounts was eſtabliſhed. The rents of the different inhabitants who lived in one neighbourhood being collected together, formed the account of a village; the rents of ſeveral villages being next collected into one view, formed the accounts of a larger portion of land. The aggregate of theſe accounts exhibited the rent of a diſtrict, and the ſum total of the rents of all the diſtricts in Bengal formed the account of the revenue of the whole province. From the reign of Akber to the government of Jaffeer Ali Cawn, A. D. 1757, the annual amount of revenue, and the modes of levying it, continued with little variation. But in order to raiſe the ſum which he had ſtipulated to pay on his elevation, he departed from the wiſe arrangements of Akber; many new modes of aſſeſſment were introduced, and exactions multiplied.

NOTE V. p. 269.

I SHALL mention only one inſtance of their attention to this uſeful regulation of police. Lahore, in the Panjab, is diſtant from Agra, the ancient capital of Indoſtan, five hundred miles. Along each ſide of the road between theſe two great cities, there is planted a continued row of ſhady trees, forming an avenue, to which (whether we conſider its extent, its beauty, or utility in a hot climate) there is nothing ſimilar in any country. Rennel's Memoir, p. 69.

NOTE VI. p. 272.

WE cannot place the equitable and mild government of Akber in a point of view more advantageous, than by contraſting

it with the conduct of other Mahomedan princes. In no country did this contrast ever appear more striking than in India. In the thousandth year of the Christian æra, Mahmud of Ghazna, to whose dominion were subjected the same countries which formed the ancient kingdom of Bactria, invaded that country. Every step of his progress in it was marked with blood and desolation. The most celebrated pagodas, the ancient monuments of Hindoo devotion and magnificence, were destroyed, the ministers of religion were massacred, and with undistinguishing ferocity the country was laid waste, and the cities plundered and burnt. About four hundred years after Mahmud, Timur or Tamerlane, a conqueror of higher fame, turned his irresistible arms against Indostan, and, though born in an age more improved, he not only equalled, but often so far surpassed the cruel deeds of Mahmud, as to be justly branded with the odious name of the "Destroying Prince," which was given to him by the Hindoos, the undeserving victims of his rage. A rapid but elegant description of their devastations may be found in Mr. Orme's Dissertation on the Establishments made by the Mahomedan conquerors in Indostan. A more full account of them is given by Mr. Gibbon, vol. v. p. 646. vol. vi. p. 339, &c. The arrogant contempt with which bigotted Mahomedans view all the nations who have not embraced the religion of the prophet, will account for the unrelenting rigour of Mahmud and Timur towards the Hindoos, and greatly enhances the merit of the tolerant spirit and moderation with which Akber governed his subjects. What impression the mild administration of Akber made upon the Hindoos, we learn from a beautiful letter of Jesswant Sing, Rajah of Joudpore, to

to Aurengzebe, his fanatical and perfecuting fucceffor. "Your "royal anceftor, Akber, whofe throne is now in heaven, con-"ducted the affairs of this empire in equity and firm fecurity "for the fpace of fifty-two years, preferving every tribe of "men in eafe and happinefs; whether they were followers of "Jefus, or of Mofes, of David, or of Mahomed; were they "Brahmins, were they of the fect of Dharians, which denies "the eternity of matter, or of that which afcribes the exiftence "of the world to chance, they all equally enjoyed his counte-"nance and favour; infomuch that his people, in gratitude "for the indifcriminate protection which he afforded them, "diftinguifhed him by the appellation of *Juggut Grow*, Guar-"dian of Mankind.——If your Majefty places any faith in "thofe books, by diftinction called divine, you will there be "inftructed, that God is the God of all mankind, not the "God of Mahomedans alone. The Pagan and the Muffel-"man are equally in his prefence. Diftinctions of colours are "of his ordination. It is He who gives exiftence. In your "temples, to his Name, the voice is raifed in prayer; in a "houfe of images, where the bell is fhaken, ftill He is the "object of adoration. To vilify the religion and cuftoms of "other men, is to fet at naught the pleafure of the Almighty. "When we deface a picture, we naturally incur the refentment "of the painter; and juftly has the Poet faid, "Prefume not "to arraign or to fcrutinize the various works of Power Di-"vine."" For this valuable communication we are indebted to Mr. Orme. Fragments, notes, p. xcvii. I have been affured by a gentleman who has read this letter in the original, that the tranflation is not only faithful but elegant.

NOTE VII. p. 282.

I HAVE not attempted a deſcription of any ſubterraneous excavations but thoſe of Elephanta, becauſe none of them have been ſo often viſited, or ſo carefully inſpected. In ſeveral parts of India, there are, however, ſtupendous works of a ſimilar nature. The extent and magnificence of the excavations in the iſland of Salſette are ſuch, that the artiſt employed by Governor Boon to make drawings of them, aſſerted that it would require the labour of forty thouſand men for forty years to finiſh them. Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 336. Looſe as this mode of eſtimation may be, it conveys an idea of the impreſſion which the view of them made upon his mind. The Pagodas of Ellore, eighteen miles from Aurungabad, are likewiſe hewn out of the ſolid rock, and if they do not equal thoſe of Elephanta and Salſette in magnitude, they ſurpaſs them far in their extent and number. M. Thevenot, who firſt gave any deſcription of theſe ſingular manſions, aſſerts, that for above two leagues all around the mountain nothing is to be ſeen but Pagodas. Voy. part iii. ch. 44. They were examined at greater leiſure and with more attention by M. Anquetil du Perron, but as his long deſcription of them is not accompanied with any plan or drawing, I cannot convey a diſtinct idea of the whole. It is evident, however, that they are the works of a powerful people, and among the innumerable figures in ſculpture with which the walls are covered, all the preſent objects

of

of Hindoo worſhip may be diſtinguiſhed. Zend-aveſta. Diſc. Prelim. p. 233. There are remarkable excavations in a mountain at Mavalipuram near Sadras. This mountain is well known on the Coromandel coaſt by the name of the *Seven Pagodas*. A good deſcription of the works there which are magnificent and of high antiquity is given. Aſiat. Reſearches, vol. i. p. 145, &c. Many other inſtances of ſimilar works might be produced if it were neceſſary. What I have aſſerted, p. 282. concerning the elegance of ſome of the ornaments in Indian buildings, is confirmed by Colonel Call, chief engineer at Madras, who urges this as a proof of the early and high civilization of the Indians. "It may ſafely be pronounced," ſays he, "that no part of the world has more marks of antiquity for arts, ſciences, and civilization, than the peninſula of India, from the Ganges to Cape Comorin. I think the carvings on ſome of the Pagodas and Choultries, as well as the grandeur of the work, exceeds any thing executed now-a-days, not only for the delicacy of the chiſel, but the expence of conſtruction, conſidering, in many inſtances, to what diſtances the component parts were carried, and to what heights raiſed." Philoſophical Tranſactions, vol. lxii. p. 354.

NOTE VIII. p. 285.

India, ſays Strabo, produces a variety of ſubſtances which dye the moſt admirable colours. That the *Indicum*, which produced the beautiful blue colour, is the ſame with the *Indigo* of the

the moderns, we may conclude not only from the reſemblance of the name, and the ſimilarity of the effects, but from the deſcription given by Pliny in the paſſage which I have quoted in the text. He knew that it was a preparation of a vegetable ſubſtance, though he was ill-informed both concerning the plant itſelf, and the proceſs by which it was fitted for uſe, which will not appear ſurpriſing when we recollect the ſtrange ignorance of the ancients with reſpect to the origin and preparation of ſilk. From the colour of Indigo, in the form in which it was imported, it is denominated by ſome authors, *Atramentum Indicum*, and *Indicum Nigrum*, Salmaſ. Exercit. p. 180, and is mentioned under the laſt of theſe names, among the articles of importation from India. Peripl. Mar. Erythr. p. 22. The colour of the modern Indigo, when undiluted, reſembles that of the ancient Indicum, being ſo intenſely coloured as to appear black. Delaval's Experim. Inquiry into the Cauſe of the Changes of Colours, Pref. p. xxiii. The *Gum Lacca*, uſed in dying a red colour, was likewiſe known to the ancients, and by the ſame name which it now bears. Salmaſ. Exercit. p. 810. This valuable ſubſtance, of ſuch extenſive utility in painting, dying, japanning, varniſhing, and in the manufacture of ſealing-wax, is the production of a very minute inſect. Theſe inſects fix themſelves upon the ſucculent extremities of the branches of certain trees, and are ſoon glued to the place on which they ſettle, by a thick pellucid liquid which exudes from their bodies, the gradual accumulation of which forms a complete cell for each inſect, which is the tomb of the parent, and the birth-place of its offspring. This glutinous ſubſtance, with which the branches of trees are entirely covered, is the Gum-lacca. An account of its formation, na-

ture, and uſe, is given in the Philoſ. Tranſ. vol. lxxi. part ii. p. 374. in a conciſe, accurate, and ſatisfactory manner. Cteſias ſeems to have received an account tolerably diſtinct of the inſect by which the Gum-lacca is produced, and celebrates the beauty of the colour which it dyes. Excerpta ex Indic. ad calc. Herodot. Edit. Weſſeling, p. 830. *Indian Dyers* was the ancient name of thoſe who dyed either the fine blue or the fine red, which points out the country whence the materials they uſed were brought. Salmaſ. Ib. p. 810. From their dying cotton-ſtuffs with different colours, it is evident that the ancient Indians muſt have made ſome conſiderable proficiency in chemical knowledge. Pliny, lib. xxxv. c. ii. § 42. gives an account of this art as far as it was known anciently. It is preciſely the ſame with that now practiſed in callico-printing.

NOTE IX. p. 295.

As Sanſkreet literature is altogether a new acquiſition to Europe, Baghvat-Geeta, the firſt tranſlation from that language, having been publiſhed ſo late as A. D. 1785, it is intimately connected with the ſubject of my inquiries, and may afford entertainment to ſome of my readers, after having reviewed in the text, with a greater degree of critical attention, the two Sanſkreet works moſt worthy of notice, to give here a ſuccinct account of other compoſitions in that tongue with which we have been made acquainted. The extenſive uſe of the Sanſkreet language is a circumſtance which merits particular attention.

" The

" The grand ſource of Indian literature," (ſays Mr. Halhed, the firſt Engliſhman who acquired the knowledge of Sanſkreet,) " the parent of almoſt every dialect from the Perſian gulf to " the China ſeas, is the Sanſkreet, a language of the moſt ve-" nerable and unfathomable antiquity; which, although, at " preſent, ſhut up in the libraries of Brahmins, and appropri-" ated ſolely to the records of their religion, appears to " have been current over moſt of the Oriental world; and " traces of its original extent may ſtill be diſcovered in almoſt " every diſtrict of Aſia. I have been often aſtoniſhed to find " the ſimilitude of Sanſkreet words with thoſe of Perſian and " Arabic, and even of Latin and Greek; and thoſe not in " technical and metaphorical terms, which the mutuation of " refined arts and improved manners might have occaſionally " introduced, but in the ground-work of language, in mo-" noſyllables, in the names of numbers, and the appellations of " ſuch things as would be firſt diſcriminated on the immediate " dawn of civilization. The reſemblance which may be ob-" ſerved in the characters on the medals and ſignets of various " diſtricts of Aſia, the light which they reciprocally reflect " upon each other, and the general analogy which they all bear " to the ſame grand prototype, afford another ample field for cu-" rioſity. The coins of Aſſam, Napaul, Caſhmeere, and many " other kingdoms, are all ſtamped with Sanſkreet characters, " and moſtly contain alluſions to the old Sanſkreet mythology. " The ſame conformity I have obſerved on the impreſſion of " ſeals from Bootan and Thibet. A collateral inference may " likewiſe be deduced from the peculiar arrangement of the " Sanſkreet alphabet, ſo very different from that of any other

" quarter of the world. This extraordinary mode of combi-
" nation ftill exifts in the greateft part of the Eaft, from the
" Indus to Pegu, in dialects now apparently unconnected, and
" in characters completely diffimilar; and it is a forcible argu-
" ment that they are all derived from the fame fource. Another
" channel of fpeculation prefents itfelf in the names of perfons
" and places, of titles and dignities, which are open to general
" notice, and in which, to the fartheft limits of Afia, may be
" found manifeft traces of the Sanfkreet." Preface to the Grammar of the Bengal Language, p. 3. After this curious account of the Sanfkreet tongue, I proceed to enumerate the works which have been tranflated from it, befides the two mentioned in the text.—1. To Mr. Wilkins we are indebted for *Heeto-pades* or *Amicable Inftruction*, in a feries of connected fables, interfperfed with moral, prudential, and political maxims. This work is in fuch high efteem throughout the Eaft, that it has been tranflated into every language fpoken there. It did not efcape the notice of the Emperor Akber, attentive to every thing that could contribute to promote ufeful knowledge. He directed his Vizier, Abul Fazel, to put it into a ftyle fuited to all capacities, and to illuftrate the obfcure paffages in it, which he accordingly did, and gave it the title of, *The Criterion of Wifdom*. At length, thefe fables made their way into Europe, and have been circulated there with additions and alterations, under the names of Pilpay and Efop. Many of the Sanfkreet apologues are ingenious and beautiful, and have been copied or imitated by the fabulifts of other nations. But in fome of them the characters of the animals introduced are very ill fuftained; to defcribe a tyger as extremely devout, and practifing

tifing charity, and other religious duties, p. 16. or an old moufe well read in the *Neetee Saftras*, i. e. Syftems of morality and policy, p. 24.; a cat who read religious books, p. 35, &c. difcovers a want of tafte, and an inattention to propriety. Many of the moral fayings, if confidered as detached maxims, are founded upon a thorough knowledge of life and manners, and convey inftruction with elegant fimplicity. But the attempt of the author to form his work into a connected feries of fables, and his mode of interweaving with them fuch a number of moral reflections in profe and in verfe, renders the ftructure of the whole fo artificial that the perufal of it becomes often unpleafant. Akber was fo fenfible of this, that, among other inftructions, he advifes his Vizier to abridge the long digreffions in that work. By thefe ftrictures it is far from my intention to detract in the fmalleft degree from the merit of Mr. Wilkins. His country is much indebted to him for having opened a new fource of fcience and tafte. The celebrity of the Heeto-pades, as well as its intrinfic merit, notwithftanding the defects which I have mentioned, juftify his choice of it, as a work worthy of being made known to Europe in its original form. From reading this and his other tranflations, no man will refufe him the praife, to which he modeftly confines his pretenfions, "of having drawn a picture which we fuppofe to be a "true likenefs, although we are unacquainted with the origi- "nal." Pref. p. xiv.—2. In the firft number of the New Afiatic Mifcellany, we have a tranflation of a celebrated compofition in the Eaft, known by the title of the *Five Gems*. It confifts of ftanzas by five poets who attended the court of Abiffura, King of Bengal. Some of thefe ftanzas are fimple and

and elegant.—3. An ode tranflated from Wulli; in which that extravagance of fancy, and thofe far-fetched and unnatural conceits, which fo often difguft Europeans with the poetical compofitions of the Eaft, abound too much. The editor has not informed us to whofe knowledge of the Sanfkreet we are indebted for thefe two tranflations.—4. Some original grants of land, of very ancient dates, tranflated by Mr. Wilkins. It may feem odd, that a charter of legal conveyance of property fhould be ranked among the literary compofitions of any people. But fo widely do the manners of the Hindoos differ from thofe of Europe, that as our lawyers multiply words and claufes, in order to render a grant complete, and to guard againft every thing that may invalidate it, the *Pundits* feem to difpatch the legal part of the deed with brevity, but, in a long preamble and conclufion, make an extraordinary difplay of their own learning, eloquence, and powers of compofition, both in profe and in verfe. The preamble to one of thefe deeds is an encomium of the monarch who grants the land, in a bold ftrain of Eaftern exaggeration: "When his innumerable army "marched, the heavens were fo filled with the duft of their feet "that the birds of the air could reft upon it." "His elephants "moved like walking mountains, and the earth, oppreffed by "their weight, mouldered into duft." It concludes with denouncing vengeance againft thofe who fhould venture to infringe this grant: "Riches and the life of man are as tranfient as drops "of water upon a leaf of the lotus. Learning this truth, O "man, do not attempt to deprive another of his property." Afiatic Refearches, vol. i. p. 123, &c. The other grant, which appears to be ftill more ancient, is not lefs remarkable. Both

2 were

were found engraved on plates of copper. Ib. p. 357, &c.— 5. The tranſlation of part of the Shaſter, publiſhed by Colonel Dow, in the year 1768, ought perhaps to have been firſt mentioned. But as this tranſlation was not made by him from the Sanſkreet, but taken from the mouth of a Brahmin, who explained the Shaſter in Perſian, or in the vulgar language of Bengal, it will fall more properly under notice when we come to inquire into the ſtate of ſcience among the Hindoos, than in this place, where we are endeavouring to give ſome idea of their taſte in compoſition.

NOTE X. p. 303.

As many of my readers may be unacquainted with the extravagant length of the four æras or periods of Indian chronology, it may be proper to give an account of them from Mr. Halhed's Preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. xxxvi.

1. The *Suttee Jogue* (or age of purity) is ſaid to have laſted three million two hundred thouſand years, and they hold that the life of man was extended in that age to one hundred thouſand years, and that his ſtature was twenty-one cubits.

2. The *Tirtah Jogue* (in which one third of mankind was corrupted) they ſuppoſe to have conſiſted of two million four hundred thouſand years, and that men lived to the age of ten thouſand years.

3. The

3. THE *Dwapaar Jogue* (in which half of the human race became depraved) endured one million ſix hundred thouſand years, and the life of man was then reduced to a thouſand years.

4. THE *Collee Jogue* (in which all mankind are corrupted, or rather leſſened, for that is the true meaning of *Collee)* is the preſent æra, which they ſuppoſe ordained to ſubſiſt four hundred thouſand years, of which near five thouſand are already paſt, and the life of man in that period is limited to one hundred years.

IF we ſuppoſe the computation of time in the Indian chronology to be made by ſolar or even by lunar years, nothing can be more extravagant in itſelf, or more repugnant to our mode of calculating the duration of the world, founded on ſacred and infallible authority. Some attempts have been made by learned men, particularly by M. Bailly, in a very ingenious diſſertation on that ſubject, to bring the chronology of the Hindoos to accord ſomewhat better with that of the Old Teſtament; but, as I could not explain the principles upon which he founds his concluſions, without entering into long and intricate diſcuſſions foreign from the ſubject of this Diſſertation, and as I cannot aſſent to ſome of his opinions, I ſhall reſt ſatisfied with referring to his Aſtron. Indienne, Diſc. Prelim. p. lxxvii. and leave my readers to judge for themſelves. I am happy to obſerve that a Memoir on the Chronology of the Hindoos will be publiſhed in the Second Volume of the Tranſactions of the Society of Bengal, and I hope that ſome

ſome learned member of that body will be able, from his acquaintance with the languages and hiſtory of the country, to throw light upon a ſubject which its connection with religion and ſcience renders extremely intereſting. From one circumſtance, however, which merits attention, we may conclude, that the information which we have hitherto received concerning the chronology of the Hindoos is very incorrect. We have, as far as I know, only five original accounts of the different Jogues or æras of the Hindoos. The firſt is given by M. Roger, who received it from the Brahmins on the Coromandel coaſt. According to it, the Suttee Jogue is a period of one million ſeven hundred and twenty-eight thouſand years; the Tirtah Jogue is one million two hundred and ninety-ſix thouſand years; the Dwapaar Jogue is eight hundred and ſixty-four thouſand. The duration of the Collee Jogue he does not ſpecify. Porte Ouverte, p. 179. The next is that of M. Bernier, who received it from the Brahmins of Benares. According to him, the duration of the Suttee Jogue was two million five hundred thouſand years; that of the Tirtah Jogue one million two hundred thouſand years; that of the Dwapaar Jogue is eight hundred and ſixty-four thouſand years. Concerning the period of the Collee Jogue, he, likewiſe, is ſilent. Voyages, tom. ii. p. 160. The third is that of Colonel Dow, according to which the Suttee Jogue is a period of fourteen million of years; the Tirtah Jogue one million eighty thouſand; the Dwapaar Jogue ſeventy-two thouſand; and the Collee Jogue thirty-ſix thouſand years. Hiſt. of Hindoſt. vol. i. p. 2. The fourth account is that of M. Le Gentil, who received it from the Brahmins of the Coromandel coaſt, and as his information was acquired in

the ſame part of India, and derived from the ſame ſource with that of M. Roger, it agrees with his in every particular. Mem. de l'Academ. des Sciences pour 1772, tom. ii. part i. p. 176. The fifth is the account of Mr. Halhed, which I have already given. From this diſcrepancy, not only of the total numbers, but of many of the articles in the different accounts, it is manifeſt that our information concerning Indian chronology is hitherto as uncertain as the whole ſyſtem of it is wild and fabulous. To me it appears highly probable, that when we underſtand more thoroughly the principles upon which the factitious æras or Jogues of the Hindoos have been formed, that we may be more able to reconcile their chronology to the true mode of computing time, founded on the authority of the Old Teſtament; and may likewiſe find reaſon to conclude, that the account given by their aſtronomers of the ſituation of the heavenly bodies at the beginning of the Collee Jogue, is not eſtabliſhed by actual obſervation, but the reſult of a retroſpective calculation. Whoever undertakes to inveſtigate farther the chronology of the Hindoos, will derive great aſſiſtance from a Memoir of Mr. Marſden on that ſubject, in which he has explained the nature of their year, and the ſeveral æras in uſe among them, with much ingenuity and preciſion. Philoſ. Tranſact. vol. lxxx. part ii. p. 560.

NOTE XI. p. 311.

In the public buildings of India, we find proofs and monuments of the proficiency of the Brahmins in ſcience, particularly of their attention to aſtronomical obſervation. Their religion

ligion enjoins, that the four fides of a Pagoda fhould face the four cardinal points. In order to execute this with accuracy, they take a method defcribed by M. le Gentil, which difcovers a confiderable degree of fcience. He carefully examined the pofition of one of their Pagodas, and found it to be perfectly exact. Voy. tom. i. p. 133, &c. As fome of their Pagodas are very ancient, they muft have early attained fuch a portion of knowledge as was requifite for placing them properly. On the ceilings of Choultrys, and other ancient edifices, the twelve figns of the zodiac are often delineated; and, from their refemblance to thofe which are now univerfally ufed, it is highly probable that the knowledge of thefe arbitrary fymbols was derived from the Eaft. Colonel Call has publifhed a drawing of the figns of the zodiac, which he found on the ceiling of a Choultry at Verdapettah, in the Madura country. Phil. Tranfact. vol. lxii. p. 353. I have a drawing of them in my poffeffion, differing from his in fome of the figures, but I cannot fay in what particular place it was found. Sir Robert Barker defcribes an obfervatory at Benares, which he vifited A. D. 1772. In it he found inftruments for aftronomical obfervation, of very large dimenfions, and conftructed with great fkill and ingenuity. Of all thefe he has publifhed drawings. Phil. Tranfact. vol. lxvii. p. 598. According to traditionary account, this obfervatory was built by the Emperor Akber. The view which Sir Robert took of it was an hafty one. It merits a more attentive infpection, in order to determine whether it was conftructed by Akber, or erected in fome more early period. Sir Robert intimates, that none but Brahmins who underftood the Sanfkreet, and could confult the aftrono-

mical tables written in that language, were capable of calculating eclipſes. P. Tieffenthaler deſcribes, in a very curſory manner, two obſervatories furniſhed with inſtruments of extraordinary magnitude, at Jepour and Ougein, in the country of Malwa. Bernouilli, tom. i. p. 316. 347. But theſe are modern ſtructures.

INDEX.

I N D E X.

Antiochus

I N D E X.

Caffa,

I N D E X.

C

5

Coromandel.

INDEX.

J

INDEX.

rian

R

T

V

W

Z

THE END.

E R R A T A.

Page 10.	line *antepen.*	*for* exclusive	*read* extensive.
11.	—— 21.	*for* people	*read* nations.
87.	—— *antepen.*	*for* the kingdom	*read* their kingdom.
183.	—— 2.	*for* shall	*read* will.
197.	—— 9.	*for* great veneration	*read* great devotion.
246.	—— 5.	*for* Khizeh	*read* Khojeh.
259.	—— *pen.*	*for* seems	*read* seem.
260.	—— 2.	*for* tends	*read* tend.